

JESUS IN HEBREWS:

AN EXEGETICAL ANALYSIS OF THE REFERENCES TO JESUS' EARTHLY LIFE

IN THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

By

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Doctor of Philosophy

University of Edinburgh

1986

PLEDGE

I do hereby affirm, pledge, and solemnly testify that this thesis, in all its parts, is entirely my own work and that I have received no illegitimate aid or assistance of any sort in its research, organization, composition, or refinement.

(December, 1985)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my deep appreciation to the Rev. Professor Hugh Anderson, Professor of New Testament, for his many valuable suggestions throughout the writing of this thesis. I am specially grateful for the time he gave to me personally in discussion on a variety of matters. His honesty with his faith has been a source of inspiration to me, and his kindly heart has helped me immeasurably through the years. I am thankful for the large amount of time he spent reading and interacting with my manuscript in its various stages of completion, challenging me to pursue excellence in my work.

I would also like to express my appreciation to Mr. David Mealand, Lecturer in New Testament, who also invested much of his time in dialogue with me concerning my thesis. He has offered many helpful suggestions along the way. Mr. Mealand has particularly helped me in the final stages of this thesis, perhaps the most trying time of all. I am grateful for his time, wisdom, and patience with both myself and my work.

I would further wish to express my appreciation to the library staff of New College Library for their invaluable and cooperative help throughout the time of my quest.

Finally, I wish to thank my dear wife, Laura, who has been a constant source of support, strength, and encouragement. She has worked selflessly over the years, supporting our family and bearing the hardships which such an endeavour inevitably brings to the family of the one who attempts such a task. With profound respect, admiration, and deep love, I dedicate this thesis to her.

In Loving Memory of
Louise Hoeffner Terveen
(1917-1978)

ABSTRACT OF THESIS

Christianity has long affirmed the humanity of Jesus, the "very man" of the church's confession. Yet, outside the gospels and Acts, the NT writers remarkably seldom address themselves to any details from Jesus' earthly life, specific words of his preaching or teaching, or statements about his experience as a man. Therefore, the particular interest which the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews exhibits in Jesus' earthly life and death is particularly noteworthy. How did the creative theologian and pastor who wrote Hebrews recall and present the earthly life and death of Jesus in his "word of exhortation" (13:22) to a community of second-generation Christians?

The primary purpose of this thesis will be to analyse (through an exegetical investigation of the relevant passages in Hebrews) the author of Hebrews' knowledge, expression and use of the earthly life of Jesus in his epistle. To which outward events or inward experiences of Jesus as a man has the author referred or alluded? How did Hebrews' author employ and apply the knowledge he did possess, and what place do the references to Jesus' earthly way have in relation to the heart of the author's message of encouragement? Was Jesus' earthly life significant for the faith and life of the church in its present existence? If so, the question 'how?' is of utmost importance for Hebrews' readers.

In the exegetical body of this thesis it will be shown that Hebrews' author has portrayed Jesus' earthly way with a realism unparalleled in NT epistles. It will be seen that the author of Hebrews' concern with and knowledge of Jesus' earthly life is far from the level of a cursory nod given to the bare "Dass" of Jesus' human existence and death. Indeed, this study will demonstrate the author of Hebrews' deep interest in the particular kind of life Jesus lived as a man-- the "how" and not simply the "that." The degree to which the author

of Hebrews maintains the "normality" of Jesus' earthly life, particularly in reference to Jesus' experience of temptation and obedience, will be shown as an extraordinary feature of this epistle. Further references to Jesus' experience of suffering and death, his genuine anxiety in the face of death and his perseverance in an authentically human faith struggle all emphasize the author of Hebrews' profound concern with the particular kind of life Jesus experienced as a man.

It will also be shown throughout the exegetical investigation into seven passages in Hebrews (2:3; 2:5-18; 4:14-16; 5:7-10; 7:14; 12:1-3; 13:12) that the reference to Jesus' earthly life was an indispensable element both for the author's christology and paraenesis. It will further be seen that a distinctive feature of the author's interpretation of the significance of Jesus' earthly life, evident in both christological and paraenetic perspectives, is a duality in the relationship between Jesus and men. In Hebrews, Jesus is in the fullest sense united with mankind, yet at the same time he remains utterly distinct from them. The tension in this dual relationship of Jesus with the human community of faith presents the interpreter of Hebrews with the poignant paradox which characterizes the author of Hebrews' understanding of Jesus "in the days of his flesh."

Through this investigation it is hoped that a more meaningful confession of Jesus' humanity will be set forth which appreciates the unique contribution of the Epistle to the Hebrews. It is further hoped that this thesis contributes toward a better understanding of the significance of Jesus' earthly life for the ongoing faith and life of the church in its present situation.

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INTRODUCTION: JESUS IN HEBREWS

No document within the NT exceeds the Epistle to the Hebrews in declaring the exalted status of Jesus Christ. The second generation unknown Christian author of this document unequivocally emphasizes the transcendent and divine character of Christ. The christology of Hebrews soars from the outset of the epistle. Having in the prologue introduced Christ as God's Son and "word" for the present era, and having referred to the divine heirship the Son has inherited, the author of Hebrews launches into a bold and lofty encomium of Jesus the Son. The Son is heir of all things (1:2), the creator of the universe (1:2), the ἀπαύγασμα of God's glory and χαρακτήρ of His essence (1:3), the Son of God (1:5) whom the angels worship (1:6), the one addressed in Ps. 45 as "God" (1:8), the eternal one (1:10-12), and the sovereign over all. Clearly, the author of Hebrews stands second to none in the NT in proclaiming Jesus as the exalted Son of God, enthroned at the right hand of the majesty on high (1:3).

Further, interpreters of Hebrews have long noted the firm emphasis in Hebrews, often via his typological understanding of Christianity, on the heavenly sphere, the realm of that which is "perfect" and "real" as opposed to that which is imperfect and only a shadowy copy. The author of Hebrews focuses on the "greater and more perfect tent" which is not part of this creation (9:11), the true "heavenly sanctuary" (8:5), and the throne of God located in heaven. The Son of God Jesus has ascended "through the heavens" (4:14) and in

the "heavenly sanctuary" forever performs his intercessory high priestly ministry (7:24; 9:24). Here again the transcendent heavenly sphere appears to dominate the author of Hebrews' conception of Jesus Christ and his ministry.

In this transcendent perspective on Jesus the author of Hebrews is roughly consistent with the dominant focus of the post-easter faith of the early church in Jesus as its heavenly risen and exalted Lord. This accentuation of Jesus as exalted Lord is particularly marked in the Pauline literature, drawing attention to a well known enigma in the NT captured succinctly in this brief comment of Bultmann: "It is strange how little reference is made in apostolic and post-apostolic literature to Jesus' life--apart from the Gospels and Acts."¹

It is particularly remarkable, therefore, that while the author of Hebrews presents his readers with a Jesus who is an exalted heavenly figure, he does not lose sight of the Jesus who "with loud cries and tears offered up prayers" to God and "learned obedience through what he suffered" (Hb. 5:7-8). Just as Paul maintained an emphasis on the crucified Jesus in his preaching and teaching, refusing to allow him to dissolve into a solely heavenly figure, the author of Hebrews places stress upon the fact that the heavenly high priest and eternal Son of Jesus also shared in the "flesh and blood" existence of men, the weak and perishable thing we call human nature. The author of Hebrews was not content to present Jesus simply as a heavenly figure, but insists upon the fully human life and experience of the man Jesus. Bultmann remarks: "As it is the Church's duty to manifest its non-worldly

¹Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, II, trans. K. Grobel (London, 1955), p. 123. It is not insignificant that Bultmann regards Hebrews as somewhat of an exception in this regard, specifically citing Hb. 2:18; 4:15; 5:7; 12:2. Unfortunately, Bultmann never undertook any substantial work on the Epistle to the Hebrews, so there is no further we can go regarding Bultmann's own understanding of Hebrews and the references to Jesus' earthly life in that particular epistle.

character in its existence within the world, so it is also its duty not completely to sublimate into myth him who called it into existence."¹ The author of Hebrews evidently saw such a "duty" clearly and far from sublimating Jesus' earthly life, he draws attention to it, seemingly glorying in it. The author of Hebrews recalls Jesus' experience of human anxiety and fear at the prospect of death (5:7f.), his susceptibility to and experience of temptations in every way like mankind's (4:15), and his endurance of sufferings and crucifixion.

Moreso than Paul, the author of Hebrews concerns himself with the human lineaments of Jesus' earthly life. V. Taylor speaks of the insistence on the reality of Jesus' humanity as a "marked feature of the epistle,"² and continues by asserting that statements such as those in Hb. 7:14, 5:15, 5:7f., 12:2-3 and 13:12 clearly imply the author's knowledge and appreciation of the events recounted in the gospel traditions.³ Other interpreters also have noted the singular realism with which Hebrews' author regards Jesus "in the days of his flesh" (5:7). Bultmann affirms that the Epistle to the Hebrews is the NT writing which "more than any other--apart from the synoptics--has the greatest interest in the life of Jesus."⁴ Montefiore similarly asserts that "the human life of Jesus has an emphasis in the Epistle to the Hebrews unique among New Testament epistles."⁵ William Manson refers to the "centrality

¹Ibid.

²V. Taylor, The Atonement in New Testament Teaching, third ed. (London, 1940), p. 114.

³Ibid.

⁴R. Bultmann, The History of the Synoptic Tradition, trans. J. Marsh (Oxford, 1963), p. 303.

⁵H. Montefiore, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, Black's NT Commentaries (London, 1964), p. 4.

of place"¹ given to the human experiences of Jesus in Hebrews. R. Williamson suggests that the author of Hebrews works his theology out "largely in terms of what Jesus was and did during what he considered to be an authentic human experience."² Williamson even goes farther to suggest that

the Writer of Hebrews constructed his theology of the great High Priesthood and the perfect sacrifice of Christ out of the materials supplied by the historical life of Jesus. . . . Only an authentic human experience, a genuine immersion in human life, . . . could enable Jesus to deal with the problem of human sin. The Incarnation for the Writer of Hebrews was far from being a pious relic or a legendary accretion . . . and I think there can be little doubt that though he does not mention them in his so-called Epistle the Writer knew much in detail about the life of Jesus.³

Was it sufficient for the author of Hebrews simply to assert the fact of Jesus' humanity? Or, as Williamson so strongly infers, does not Hebrews reveal the author's awareness of and interest in more than just the bare factuality of Jesus' existence? Few, to be sure, challenge the reality of Jesus' humanity. Indeed, apart from heretical docetics, the "very man" of the church's confession has been upheld virtually unquestioned. But, as H. Thielicke rightly points out, "the virtual consensus on the humanity shows that the true problem is the manner of the humanity rather than the fact."⁴ The question then is raised of how the creative theologian and pastor who composed Hebrews understood and presented Jesus' earthly life and death in his "word of exhortation" (13:22).

The primary purpose of this thesis will be to analyse (through exegetical investigation of the relevant passages in Hebrews) the author

¹William Manson, The Epistle to the Hebrews (London, 1951), p. 188f.

²R. Williamson, Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews (Leiden, 1970), p. 153.

³Ibid., pp. 153f.

⁴H. Thielicke, The Evangelical Faith: The Doctrine of God and of Christ II, trans. G. Bromiley (Edinburgh, 1977), pp. 366f.

of Hebrews' knowledge, expression and use of the earthly life of Jesus. To which outward events or inward experiences of Jesus' earthly life has the author of Hebrews referred or alluded? In what way has he presented this information? Does the reference in Hebrews reveal any particular source or influence through its form of expression? How does the author of Hebrews make use of the references to Jesus' earthly life in his christology and paraenesis? How significant is Jesus' earthly life for the faith and life of his readers and himself? These are the foundational exegetical questions to which we shall address our inquiries in the body of this thesis.

Although there is a general awareness among biblical interpreters that Hebrews has a notable interest in Jesus' humanity--as the common reference to this in NT Christologies witnesses--a thoroughgoing exegetical examination of the references to Jesus' earthly way throughout Hebrews is not commonplace.

The plan of the following exegetical study will be to examine those passages in Hebrews--seven in all--which reveal possible reference or allusion to the earthly life of Jesus. We will take the sections of Hebrews as they occur in the epistle.

In chapter one we will investigate the possible allusion to Jesus' preaching and teaching the gospel message to his disciples, those who later would prove to be the sources of the author and readers of Hebrews' knowledge about Jesus (Hb. 2:3).

In chapter two we shall analyse a lengthy section of Hebrews (2:5-18) which in a remarkable way links the Son Jesus with the "many sons", Jesus' human "brothers." The distinctive christological perspective of Jesus as ἀρχηγός occurs in 2:10 for the first time, though it is taken up again in 12:2. Jesus' brotherhood with men is the overarching theme of this passage (2:5-18), and reference to the humanity of

plays no small role in the argument of this passage. Furthermore, in the last two verses of this section the author of Hebrews introduces in anticipatory fashion the theme of Jesus as ἀρχιερεὺς.

Chapters three and four deal with a passage, Hb. 4:14-5:10, which lays the foundation of Hebrews' christology of Jesus as the great high priest. It is perhaps not coincidental that the author of Hebrews refers most colourfully and strongly to Jesus' earthly life within this passage. The profoundly significant themes of Jesus' susceptibility to and experience of temptation, his sinlessness and obedience to God's will, and his anguished prayer in the face of death all occur in this passage.

In chapter five we will look into an apparently insignificant historical detail concerning the descent of Jesus from the tribal line of Judah (Hb. 7:14). Its occurrence in the notorious Melchizedek chapter of Hebrews, however, makes this outward detail of Jesus' life singularly important to the author of Hebrews' contrast of Jesus' priesthood according to the order of Melchizedek with that of the OT levitical priesthood.

In Hb. 12:1-3 the author holds before his readers the ἀρχηγός and τελειωτής of faith Jesus, who endured the cross while disregarding its shame. In chapter six we discover the author of Hebrews' unique emphasis on Jesus with regard to faith.

Our final chapter looks at the reference in 13:12 to Jesus' crucifixion "outside the gate," a clear recollection of the site of Jesus' death beyond the city walls of Jerusalem.

The conclusion chapter will be an attempt to draw together those themes, patterns and motifs which characterize the author of Hebrews' understanding and application of Jesus' earthly life in his "word of encouragement".

Chapter 1

JESUS: PROCLAIMER OF SALVATION (Hb. 2:3) .

Chapter 1

JESUS: PROCLAIMER OF SALVATION (Hb. 2:3)

I. Introduction

As is characteristic of the pastorally concerned author of Hebrews, he follows a doctrinal discourse (1:4-14), wherein he has pointedly drawn attention to the unsurpassable dignity of the Son--Jesus--in contrast to the lesser glory of the angels (λειτουργικὰ πνεύματα, 1:14), with a practical exhortation (2:1-4) to a proper course of religious action which follows logically from the previous teaching on the Son's surpassing dignity.¹ Within this first paraenetic section of our epistle lies a possible allusion to part of the earthly ministry of Jesus, namely his preaching of salvation--σωτηρία, ἥτις ἀρχὴν λαβοῦσα λαλεῖσθαι διὰ τοῦ κυρίου (2:3).

Our interest then will focus on the nature of the allusion to which our author here makes reference. In particular, we must ask whether or not we are in Hb. 2:3 indeed faced with a clear reference to the earthly ministry of Jesus. But first we must consider certain relevant exegetical observations about Hb. 2:3 in order to identify the key issues relating to this allusion.

¹This homiletic pattern of exposition/exhortation may be observed throughout Hebrews. See A. Vanhoye, La Structure littéraire de l'épître aux Hébreux (Paris, 1963); see also J. Swetnam, "Form and Content in Hebrews 1-6," Biblica 53 (1972), 368-85; also J. Swetnam, "Form and Content in Hebrews 7-13," Biblica 55 (1974), 333-48; cf. A. Vanhoye, "Discussions sur la structure de l'Épître aux Hébreux," Biblica 55 (3, 1974), 349-380. The alternation of exposition and exhortation is generally seen as one of the principal criteria for the structural analysis of Hebrews.

II. Contextual Considerations

In the preceding doctrinal section (1:4-14) the author has highlighted the all-surpassing grandeur and dignity of the Son in contrast to the angels. The question, 'why this contrast of the angels and the Son?', has frequently been asked and has received a variety of answers.¹ However, the contextual clue given in the following exhortatory warning (2:1-4) seems to indicate the most likely purpose for the contrast of the Son with the angels. The aim was to compare the form of God's Speaking in "these last days" through a Son (1:1-4), the final and definitive form of his speaking to men (his 'eschatological word'), with the form of God's λόγος which was mediated via the angels, namely the Law.²

¹Most notably Y. Yadin, in his article "The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Epistle to the Hebrews," in Scripta Hierosolymitana IV, ed. C. Rabin and Y. Yadin (Jerusalem, 1958), 36-55, suggested the dangerous confusing of Jesus as Son of God with an angelic being. See A. Baaker, "Christ an Angel?," ZNW 32 (1933), 255-65; also see M. de Jonge and H. S. van der Woude, "11QMelchizedek and the New Testament," NTS 12 (1965), 301-26. This possibility seems unlikely since no paraenetic passages in Hebrews actually betray such a concern. We should also note Yadin's further argumentation that the case for Jesus' superiority over the angels in Hebrews may suggest that the addressees had some sort of connexion with the Qumran sect and the angelology. F. F. Bruce, "'To the Hebrews' or 'To the Essenes,'" NTS 9 (1963), 217-232, provides a cautious rebuttal to this suggestion.

²J. Moffatt, in his classic commentary A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews (Edinburgh, 1924), p. 18, notes this: "Λόγος is used, not νόμος, in keeping with the emphasis upon the divine λαλεῖν in the context, and, instead of νόμος Μωσέως (10:28), ὁ δι' ἀγγέλων λαληθεὶς λόγος is chosen for argumentative reason. Here as in Gal. 3:19 and Acts 7:38,53. . . the function of angels in the revelation of the Law at Sinai is assumed, but without any disparaging tone such as is overheard in Paul's reference. The writer and his readers shared the belief, which first appeared in Hellenistic Judaism, that God employed angels at Sinai. Josephus (Ant. xv. 136) repeats this tradition, but it went back to the LXX which altered Dt. 33:2 into a definite proof of angelic co-operation. . . and brought this out in Ps. 68:18." See also F. F. Bruce, The Epistle to the Hebrews (Grand Rapids, 1964), 28f.

III. Exegesis of Hb. 2:3

As noted above, the reference to Jesus' preaching of σωτηρία occurs in this first paraenetic section of Hebrews (2:1-4), wherein the author presses upon his readers, in characteristic warning tones,¹ the vital necessity of paying closer attention to "what we have heard" (δεῖν περισσοτέρως προσέχειν ἡμᾶς τοῖς ἀκουσθεῖσιν; 2:1). In brief, the sober a-fortiori² argument of 2:1-4 runs like this: If the word God delivered through angels (the Law) was valid and completely upheld, how much greater is the validity and sanctity of His word in His Son (the New Covenant) whose dignity far surpasses that of the angels? There is thus no chance for escape³ from punishment if this word of σωτηρία, spoken through the Lord himself, is neglected. Therefore, they must apply themselves more earnestly to the great salvation which they have heard already. While the contrast between the Old and the New Covenant had already been introduced in 1:1-4, this time the

¹The well noted rigorous tone of Hebrews' admonitions is evident in 2:1-4, 3:7-19, 5:11-6:4, and 10:26-31. See R. Williamson, Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews (Leiden, 1977), esp. pp. 245-276, where Williamson discusses the stringent tone of Hebrews concentrating primarily on 6:4ff. and 10:26-31. See also I. H. Marshall, Kept by the Power of God. A Study of Perseverance and Falling Away (London, 1969), esp. pp. 132-154; also N. Weeks, "Admonition and Error in Hebrews," West.ThJ 39 (1976), 72-80; also J. C. McCullough, "The Impossibility of a Second Repentance in Hebrews," BibTh 20 (3, 1974), 1-7.

²The a-fortiori argument is a particularly characteristic type of analogical reasoning employed by the author of Hebrews (also at 7:21f., 9:13f., 10:28f., and 12:9, 25). "In 2:2f. we have a characteristic (e.g. 10:28-31) argument a minori ad maius" (Moffatt, Hebrews, p. 18). See also G. W. Buchanan, To the Hebrews, The Anchor Bible (New York, 1972), p. xxiii f.

³The force of the rhetorical question suggests there is no possibility of escape from punishment if this great salvation is treated with culpable neglect. B. F. Westcott notes that the rhetorical question is a characteristic literary device of our author's style--as in 1:5, 14, 3:16ff., 7:11, 12:7 (The Epistle to the Hebrews (London, 1889, reprint Grand Rapids, n.d.), p. 20).

author sets about proving the superiority of the New Covenant's σωτηρία by an appeal to its history.

According to the author of Hebrews σωτηρία is that which the Lord has proclaimed. But may we be more precise in our understanding of what σωτηρία means for the author? As the author of Hebrews uses the term σωτηρία in an absolute way both in 1:14 and here in 2:3,¹ it seems as though the term had already gained common acceptance with the author and his readers and thus required no definition.² Perhaps the most definite we can be is to affirm that σωτηρία operates here as a technical term for the 'gospel' or the 'new covenant' which Jesus the Son initiated, as is apparent since it appears here in contrast to the word spoken via angels, the Law.

Since however, as Moffatt rightly notes, the phrase τοῦ μέλλοντα κληρονομεῖν σωτηρίαν (1:14) serves as an important transition to the deeper theme of the next passage (2:1-9), namely the relation of the Son to this σωτηρία,³ it may be helpful for us to examine the basic sense of our author's conception of σωτηρία here.

The author of Hebrews conceives of σωτηρία in a negative and a positive fashion.⁴ The dominant negative concept here is one of the

¹The noun σωτηρία is also used in Hebrews at 2:10, 5:9, 6:9, 9:28 and 11:7.

²See Moffatt, Hebrews, p. 16; see also H. Montefiore, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, Black's New Testament Commentaries (London, 1964), p. 50.

³Moffatt, Hebrews, p. 16.

⁴W. Foerster, in his article on "σώζω," TDNT, vol. VII, ed. G. Friedrich, trans. G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, 1971), 965-1024, notes a dual perspective on σωτηρία in Paul also: (1) salvation from God's wrath (Ro. 5:9; 1 Cor. 3:15, 5:5; 1 Thess. 5:9) or deliverance (2 Cor. 5:10) and (2) more positively the endowment with the divine δόξα (see esp. pp. 990-998).

provision of deliverance or escape from certain punishment,¹ the wrath of God's righteous judgment. G. W. Buchanan indicates that the OT sense of "deliverance from one's enemy's power at war" is present at 1:14 where Hebrews refers to that deliverance by the Son when God makes his "enemies a footstool for (His) feet" (1:13).² The reference in 2:14f. to the Son destroying man's enemy, the Devil, who has enslaved men through fear of death, and hence delivering his 'children' could also suggest that deliverance from one's enemy is very much a part of Hebrews' concept of σωτηρία. Though the enemy is not plainly in sight in 2:3, one could conjecture that the inferred retribution (God's wrath) is the non-deliverance of the person, hence he is still beneath the power of the enemy, the Devil. Of course, it is also possible that our author simultaneously holds together a twofold sense of deliverance: (1) deliverance from the enemy and (2) deliverance from God's wrath. While they may in some way flow together, the latter does appear to reflect more directly our author's thought in 2:3.³ This is borne out by the context here where the Law and the σωτηρία spoken through the Lord are juxtaposed. As punishment was justly meted out for disregard of the Law, so even more certainly will punishment fall upon those who would foolishly neglect the word of the Lord himself.⁴

¹See e.g. Montefiore, Hebrews, p. 52f.

²Buchanan, Hebrews, p. 25. On this point Montefiore (Hebrews, p. 50) asserts that at 1:14 σωτηρία "loses its original meaning of wholeness or escape and simply stands for the christian hope." Whether this is true or not deliverance or escape does indeed seem appropriate in 2:3. Hb. 2:14f. seems to indicate that deliverance from an enemy (the Devil) was still a concept very much alive to our author.

³At Hb. 11:7 we see the word σωτηρία clearly used in the sense of deliverance from God's wrath. This plainly indicates the possibility that the author thought along these lines in Hb. 2:1-4.

⁴Westcott, Hebrews, p. 38, writes that " . . . the word

We just note briefly that Hebrews does conceive of salvation in a positive sense as well. The δόξα into which many sons (πολλοὺς υἱοὺς εἰς δόξαν ἀγάγοντα 2:10) are brought corresponds to the σωτηρία of which Jesus is the ἀρχηγός, perfected through suffering (Hb. 2:10). A. Nairne notes that "salvation in the fullest sense is but the completion of God's work upon men, the successful end of their probation and education (Hort); so in this epistle it is associated with 'progress' and 'perfection' (2:10, 5:9, 6:9)."¹ σωτηρία is that δόξα into which believers are led by Jesus and in some way it is associated with our author's singular use of the 'perfection' concept.²

Nevertheless, the negative sense of deliverance from retribution appears to be foremost in our author's mind when he speaks of σωτηρία here in 2:3, a fact explained by the warning context in which it occurs.

We also just briefly note that σωτηρία here in 2:3 may be seen as having a twofold eschatological sense: (1) 'futuristic' and (2) 'realised.' W. Foerster writes in this regard:

The terminological expansion of the word σωτηρία is even plainer in Hb. 2:3. . . . Salvation itself is proclaimed by Jesus. It is not just that the message of salvation is validly brought to the readers; salvation takes place with the λαλεῖσθαι. It is however a τηλικαύτη σωτηρία, since the salvation now proclaimed and effected is also the salvation which will one day be consummated, i.e. δόξα.³

(μισθαποδοσία) appears to emphasise the idea of an exact requital of good or evil by a sovereign Judge. The discipline and punishment of the wilderness (cf. 3:16ff.) furnished the typical illustration of this teaching which extends to the whole Jewish life." Moffatt, Hebrews, 19, also notes that "the Law proved no dead letter in the history of God's people; it enforced pains and penalties for disobedience" (he refers also to 3:17 and 10:28).

¹A. Nairne, The Epistle to the Hebrews (Cambridge, 1917), p.36.

²'Perfection' is a key concept in this epistle, but we shall reserve treatment of it for more appropriate passages of the epistle.

³Foerster, "σωτηρία," p. 996.

On the one hand, since the author is warning them not to drift away from the faith by neglecting such a great salvation, the salvation is in some sense yet future and the readers may yet correct their error. This seems the correct sense. However such a futurist perspective is not completely pure here. While the futurist sense nevertheless seems to dominate in this exhortatory section, it is perhaps best to acknowledge the close intermingling of these two perspectives in the mind of the author and leave it now as it presses beyond the scope of our immediate concern.¹

The qualitative pronoun ἥτις² leads us on to the author's comment on the σωτηρία which greatly concerns us. It was a salvation ἀρχὴν λαβοῦσα λαλεῖσθαι διὰ τοῦ κυρίου (2:3).

The peculiar phrase ἀρχὴν λαβοῦσα³ λαλεῖσθαι may literally translated say that salvation "received its beginning of being spoken"

¹See G. Hughes' study, Hebrews and Hermeneutics. The Epistle to the Hebrews as a New Testament Example of Biblical Interpretation (Cambridge, 1979), in which he dwells at length on the proposition (generally correct I feel) that the exhortatory sections of the Epistle are predominantly 'futuristic' in their eschatological perspective while the doctrinal portions evidence a 'realised' perspective (see esp. pp. 35-74 and 137-142). Foerster, "σωτηρία," p. 996, also notes this intertwined eschatological character when he observes that "it is typical of Hebrews that the coming σωτηρία is viewed as already present." This also leads one to ask whether our author believes that σωτηρία is made present in the λαλεῖσθαι as an 'heilsgeschehen' (i.e. in the kerygma) and simultaneously believes that the σωτηρία--about which the Lord speaks--is a future salvation event. Whether and how the 'already and not-yet' dialectic operates in our author's eschatological conceptions is indeed a key issue in Hebrews.

²"The pronoun preserves its full force; . . . ὅτις, as distinguished from ὅς, is rightly described as qualitative and generic" (Westcott, Hebrews, p. 39). One might render it "such (a salvation) as. . . ."

³This phrase (ἀρχὴν λαβοῦσα) is unique in NT literature, though it was a familiar Hellenistic phrase. Moffatt, Hebrews, p. 19, notes its occurrence in Philo (Qu. in Exod. 12:2 and De vit. M.I 1:14).

by the Lord.¹ It appears that salvation is asserted by our author to have been 'initially spoken' by the Lord. "It was Jesus who first announced salvation."²

The 'spoken-ness' of salvation through the Lord is here clearly proposed as the 'origin'³ or 'beginning' (ἀρχή) of salvation. G. Hughes further suggests that ἀρχή, οἱ ἀκουσάντε, and ἡμᾶ (2:3b) are all concrete enough in themselves to reveal definite historical reference points, and that they together form an "observable process of tradition."⁴ The Lord's 'speaking' of salvation lies precisely at the ἀρχή of this earthly train of witnesses.

The infinitive λαλεῖσθαι suggests the spoken character of this salvation which was initially through the Lord. It calls our attention again to the 'word' concept running implicitly throughout the argument thus far. The verbal similarities of 2:2 with 2:3 (ὁ δι' ἀγγέλων λαληθεῖ, λόγοι / λέλεισθαι διὰ τοῦ κυρίου; βέβαιοι / ἐβεβαιώθη)⁵ indicate the close correspondence between the 'word' via the angels and the 'word' via the Lord. The importance of the fact that our author began with the assertion that God has in these last days 'spoken' (ἐλάλησεν, 1:2)⁶ in a Son (the 'eschatological Word') may not be ignored. 'God's

¹Montefiore, Hebrews, p. 53, suggests this literal rendering.

²Buchanan, Hebrews, p. 253.

³Westcott, Hebrews, p. 39, suggests the phrase ἀρχὴν λαβοῦσα λαλεῖσθαι means "somewhat more than the simple fact 'having first been spoken,' and implies that the teaching of the Lord was the true origin of the Gospel."

⁴G. Hughes, Hebrews and Hermeneutics, p. 91.

⁵P. E. Hughes, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews (Grand Rapids, 1977), p. 77n.50) notes that both λαληθεῖ and λαλεῖσθαι are 'divine passives,' implying that God spoke on both occasions.

⁶The 'divine passives' of λαλέω, used in 2:2,3, and the active in 1:2 both reflect the author's consistent thought that it is God who ultimately lies behind all forms of the λόγοι.

Speaking' undoubtedly dominates the author's thought thus far in the epistle.¹ Yet there is something imponderable about this 'spokenness' of salvation through the Lord in Hb. 2:3 which presents problems for interpretation. E. Grässer pinpoints the problem by suggesting the unclearness as to whether the ἀρχή . . . διὰ τοῦ κυρίου refers to the proclamation of the earthly Jesus or to a christological formula, the "kerygmatic Word of God in a Son" (1:2).² We shall return to this question in a moment.

The preposition διὰ, both at 2:2 and 2:3, indicates the sense of mediation or agency. It is God who speaks on both occasions,³ but mediate, through the angels previously and through the Lord now.⁴ Thus the author in this warning context draws attention to the manner of revelation. A. B. Davidson notes that this whole allusion serves to "bring out the contrast between the manner of its (the gospel's) revelation and that of the Law, and thus support the admonition in

¹Indeed G. Hughes, Hebrews and Hermeneutics, p. 44, asserts 'God's Speaking,' His Word as the "central thread along which an historical developmental process takes place." That is to say that the Word of God has earlier and later forms which stand in relation to one another 'horizontally' or historically' as anticipation and achievement. Hughes indeed affirms: "For the starting point and internal dynamic of this theology (of the Word of God)--we might say, more than any other in the New Testament including the Fourth Gospel--is the conviction that God speaks" (p. 46).

²E. Grässer, "Das Heil als Wort, Hebr. 2:1-4," in Neues Testament und Geschichte, O. Cullmann Festschrift, ed. H. Baltensweiler and B. Reicke (Tubingen, 1972), p. 261-74. See esp. pp. 263-6.

³See above p. 14 nn. 5,6.

⁴The preposition διὰ is significant here. God is the source of both the word 'through' the angels and the word 'through' the Lord; διὰ clearly indicates their role as mediators of God's word. E. Grässer, "Das Heil," p. 263 n. 13, notes: "Man wurde ἀπό oder παρά erwarten. Aber ἀπό bezeichnet den Urheber einer Tradition. . . , παρά bezeichnet den Tradenten, der eine Überlieferung weitergibt (Gal. 1:12; 1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 1:13; 2:2; 3:14)."

2:1-3."¹ Here the superior manner of revelation, i.e. the Lord, markedly strengthens the warning.

This word was through 'the Lord' (τοῦ κυρίου), a title which could signify an exalted image of Jesus.² However, it is also possible that κύριος is used here as a commonly accepted title of Jesus, applicable to a rather more earthly view of him.³ Buchanan suggests that the term 'Lord' means 'apostle' or 'messenger.'⁴ A. S. Peake may be right when he says, "The writer uses this title of the Son, because it emphasized the dignity of the speaker and thus the weightiness of his message."⁵ For our purpose though we do not derive too

¹A. B. Davidson, The Epistle to the Hebrews, Handbooks for Bible Classes (Edinburgh, 1882), p. 53.

²Grässer (Das Heil," p. 264f.) notes that A. Seeberg (in Der Brief an die Hebräer, 1912) insists that the Kyrios title reveals that the author of Hebrews was thinking of the resurrection which communicated that crucial word to the disciples. Hence, as Grässer points out, for Seeberg the historical starting point of salvation was not the word of the earthly-one, but rather of the exalted-one.

³H. L. MacNeill, The Christology of the Epistle to the Hebrews (Chicago, 1914), p. 77, claims that "it is probably an example of the use of the title (κύριος) to denote Jesus in his earthly career which Case (see S. J. Case, JBL 26 (1907), p. 260) refers to as quite common." C. F. D. Moule, The Origin of Christology (Cambridge, 1977), p. 38, notes F. Hahn's observation that "the designation of Christ's brothers as 'the brothers of our Lord' (tou kuriou, 1 Cor. 9:5; Gal. 1:19), and later as 'desposounoi,' seems to point to an application of the term 'the Lord' to the Jesus of the earthly ministry" (from F. Hahn, The Titles of Jesus in Christology (London, 1969), p. 86); cf. E. Grässer's reference to Hahn's book on this matter ("Das Heil," p. 264 n. 18).

⁴Buchanan, who states that 2:3 "probably refers to the sayings of Jesus" (Hebrews, p. 25), refers to the article of K. Berger, "Zum Traditionsgeschichte¹ Hintergrund Christologischer Hoheitstitel," NTS 17 (1970-71), pp. 413-22, in which Berger "compared Moses and Enoch to Jesus and some angels to show that the term 'Lord' means apostle or messenger" (Hebrews, p. 25 n. 17). Buchanan suggests that this is consistent with the apostolic Christology of Hebrews.

⁵A. S. Peake, The Epistle to the Hebrews, The Century Bible (Edinburgh, 1914), p. 94. Peake does hold that this passage refers to part of the ministry of the earthly Lord Jesus; ". . . the gospel took its origin in the teaching of the Lord" (p. 94).

much help from the use of the title 'Lord' here, since the use of the title 'Lord' neither confirms nor refutes the possibility that our author here makes reference to the earthly proclamation of Jesus.

IV. Conclusions

We began our brief examination of this passage seeking to determine 'what' we have in this allusion to the original speaking of salvation through the Lord. Are we confronted here in 2:3 with a genuine reference to the earthly way of Jesus? Or not? If we are, how may we describe the reference? Is it so plain that "there is here a clear reference to the historical Jesus?"¹ May we endorse the bold assertion of H. L. MacNeill that ". . . in this passage (2:3,4) there is a genuine historical reminiscence with all the atmosphere of the early Christian community"?² Does this allusion refer to the actual sayings of Jesus himself?³ Let us make some further observations from our previous discussion.

First, one must admit a certain degree of ambiguity concerning the 'spoken' character of σωτηρία. As we noted above, there is some cause for uncertainty as to whether the ἀρχή which is διὰ τοῦ κυρίου refers to the proclamation of the earthly Jesus or to the kerygmatic Word of God in a Son (1:2). The prologue precisely states, in an implicit Logos christology, that God spoke (ἐλάλησεν) in a Son. God's 'Speaking' is identified precisely as a person--His 'Word in a Son.' Grässer writes: "Sein λόγος (6:1) ist nicht Information über das Heil, er ist selber das eschatologische Heilsgeschehen. . . ; Das Heils-

¹Montefiore, Hebrews, p. 53.

²MacNeill, Christology of Hebrews, p. 77.

³Buchanan, Hebrews, p. 25, sees this as "probable."

geschehen als solches ist 'Wort.'"¹ Since this concern with God's Speaking continues throughout Hb. 1:1-2:4, it seems possible that σωτηρία. . . λαλῆσθαι διὰ τοῦ κυρίου may indeed be a theological construct relating what Grässer calls the 'kerygmatic Word of God in a Son.' Moffatt appears to lean in this direction when he writes:

The Christian revelation was made through Jesus who had lived and suffered and ascended, and the reference is not specifically to his teaching, but to his personality and career, in which God's saving purpose came to full expression.²

Given the fact of the total absence of any direct words of the Lord in the epistle and the generalized nature of this reference, it may indeed appear that we have no earthly reminiscence here. Rather it is a theological construct identical with the 'Word-in-a-Son' formula of the prologue.

However, it may be argued convincingly, we believe, that the author of Hebrews does likely intend a reference here to the actual proclamation of the message of salvation by the earthly Jesus.

First, the use of ἀκουσάντων ("those who heard"), speaking of those who brought the salvation "spoken through the Lord" to the author and his readers (εἰς ἡμᾶς), suggests what Peake calls "ear-witnesses."³ Evidently neither the author nor his readers were "ear-witnesses" to Jesus' proclamation of salvation,⁴ but rather they

¹Grässer, "Das Heil," p. 266. He continues on the same page to assert that "'Wort' und 'Hören' kennzeichnen unfassend das eschatologische Heilsereignis in seinem extra nos und pro nobis."

²Moffatt, Hebrews, p. 19.

³Peake, Hebrews, p. 94; cf. Grässer, "Das Heil," p. 267f., who speaks of the high 'Amt' of the 'Hörer.'

⁴This verse of course is often cited as proof positive that Paul did not write Hebrews. It is scarcely conceivable that Paul, who claimed a direct revelation from Christ himself (Gal. 1:12) and strongly asserted his independence of the apostles, could have stated what the author of Hebrews here states. Calvin, The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews and the First and Second Epistles of St.

received the gospel from "those who listened" (ἀκουσάντων) to him. If ἀκουσάντων means those who heard Jesus himself, then the previous reference to Jesus' speaking of salvation would likely mean his actual earthly preaching and teaching--his message of salvation. The 'immediate hearers,'¹ namely the apostles and their contemporaries, were those who testified (ἐβεβαιώθη) to the author and his readers (εἰς ἡμᾶς) that which they had heard (τοῖς ἀκουσθεῖσιν 2:1).

Grässer himself concedes that the author's intention in reflecting on the ἀρχή of salvation is to establish the first link in a chain of earthly witnesses.² J. Héring notes that verses 3b and 4 "outline the history and stress the truth of the new revelation."³ Salvation was proclaimed first by the Lord; it was heard by Jesus' immediate disciples (ἀκουσάντων); these disciples passed it on as witnesses to our author and his readers (εἰς ἡμᾶς); and even God himself testified to it via σημείοις, τέρασιν, ποικίλαις δυνάμεσιν and πνεύματος ἁγίου μερισμοῖς (2:4) in the life of the primitive church. If this earthly chain of witnesses does indicate a definite earthly history of tradition,⁴ we may fairly assert that that tradition dealt with a

Peter, trans. W. B. Johnston (Edinburgh, 1963), p. 1, in the introduction to his commentary (1549) states: "The manner of teaching and the style sufficiently show that Paul was not the author, and the writer himself confesses in the second chapter that he was one of the disciples of the apostles, which is wholly different from the way in which Paul spoke of himself." See P. E. Hughes, Hebrews, p. 19-30, on authorship for a reasonably good survey of this perplexing problem; cf. J. Héring, The Epistle to the Hebrews, trans. A. W. Heathcote and P. J. Allcock (London, 1970), esp. p. xiiiif.

¹Westcott, Hebrews, p. 39.

²"Mir scheint es darum unbestreitbar, dass mit einer Reflexion auf die ἀρχή des Heils, deren intention nachweislich, die herausstellung des ersten Gliedes einer irdisches Zeugenskette ist, . . . " (Grässer, "Das Heil," p. 266).

³Héring, Hebrews, p. 13.

⁴Supra p. 14 . G. Hughes, Hebrews and Hermeneutics, p. 91,

message of salvation which was only capable of transmission from one person to another through verbal means.¹ Thus it would appear logical to take the reference to Jesus' speaking of salvation in its plainest sense--Jesus while on earth preached and taught salvation and was the first link in a chain of verbal historical witnesses to God's salvation.

If then our first observation is true, that we are likely here faced with an allusion to the life of the earthly Jesus, what further pertinent observations can we make?

Certainly, as has been repeatedly noticed, we must again stress the fact that our author has brought up this reference to the earthly Jesus in a paraenetic context.² Here, where the author drives home the point of his preceding doctrinal exposition in a strongly stated yet pastorally motivated admonition, he casts an important glance backward to the earthly beginnings of salvation--to its first proclamation and proclaimer. We have already drawn attention to the allusion's occurrence as the first link in an earthly chain of witnesses within this paraenesis.³

Then again we must remark that while this allusion certainly does reflect on the earthly Jesus' proclamation of σωτηρία, it does so

writes: "The starting point must be his own affirmation at 2:3 that the salvation bearing Word (λόγος) has, from its origins in Jesus been transmitted through a definite history of tradition."

¹Grässer, in "Das Heil," p. 266f., writes: "Die σωτηρία ist primär eine solche, die gesagt werden muss, ist primär ein Wort-geschehen, dessen Verständnis nicht orientiert ist am inspirierten Wortlaut, auch nicht am mythisch oder dogmatisch fixierten Satz, sondern am lebendigen Verkündigungsgeschehen. . . ."

²We have already (see p. 9, nn.2,3) noted the a-fortiori argumentation and the rhetorical questioning which are characteristic of the author's literary style.

³The author of Hebrews in his own way seeks in this exhortation to secure the trustworthiness and truth of the gospel of Jesus through

in a singularly general manner. The author refers in a broad way to Jesus' proclamation of salvation. Neither the word σωτηρία¹ nor λαλεῖσθαι² lend any specificity to this reference. E. F. Scott contends that "for the most part the earthly life (of Jesus) is described in large outlines which mark out its pervading character rather than its definite events."³ Though this conclusion may be debated, Hb. 2:3 indeed contains a very general reference to Jesus' earthly ministry and could not be appealed to to refute Scott's conclusion. However, we would quickly add that this allusion is not an insignificant "passing reference"⁴ to Jesus' proclamation of the gospel. General, yes, but insignificant, no; it plays a significant role in this exhortation.

One more observation is in order at this point. H. Windisch correctly points out: "Der Hinweis auf die Predigt Jesu (2:3) hat den Verfasser doch nicht veranlasst, aus dem Inhalt dieser Verkündigung zu schöpfen."⁵ Indeed, as E. Grässer also notes: "Nirgends wird ein geschichtliches Herrnwort zitiert, ja, es gibt nicht einmal Anspielungen an die synoptische Wortüberlieferung."⁶ There is even less an

an exhibition of an historical chain of witnesses--not a particularly original device in his time. However for our question the manner in which he does this is singularly notable. Cf. Grässer, "Das Heil," p. 261.

¹As we have noted already, σωτηρία is ill-defined here as it was likely a technical term with its general sense assumed to be understood.

²While the verb λαλέω is not insignificant, particularly in this context, it does lack the specificity of διδάσκω or εὐαγγελίζω for example.

³E. F. Scott, The Epistle to the Hebrews (Edinburgh, 1922), p. 148f. Scott does note however that "in the few instances where particular facts of the history are mentioned they are connected wholly with the closing episodes of his earthly career." (p. 149).

⁴Ibid., p. 149.

⁵H. Windisch, Der Hebräerbrief (Tübingen, 1931), p. 68.

⁶E. Grässer, "Der historische Jesus in Hebräerbrief," ZNW 56 (1965), p. 68.

emphasis in Hebrews on the specific words of Jesus than in Paul.¹ This situation suggests to us that for the purposes of this passage the specifics of Jesus' gospel teaching were not in mind, but rather the act itself of the gospel's proclamation by Jesus himself. That is to say that it was the fact that Jesus proclaimed the gospel that is most crucial for our author's argument, not (for now) the specifics of that teaching.² This would also account for the general nature of the allusion. General though it is and not overtly described as to its content, Jesus' proclamation of salvation is by no means unimportant to our author.

In summary, our investigation reveals that we are probably dealing with a reference to the ministry of the earthly Jesus here at 2:3. The reference to his gospel proclamation is set in a paraenetic passage within a chain of historical witnesses to the trustworthiness and validity of the gospel. Though a general reference and not expanded upon further in Hebrews, the historical fact of Jesus' earthly proclamation of the gospel may not be regarded simply as an insignificant passing reference. Rather, the author of Hebrews places significant paraenetic weight on this reference to Jesus' proclamation.

¹Interestingly though, in light of the fact that Paul does appear to allude to the teaching of Jesus more than the author of Hebrews, H. Windisch contends that "in jedem Fall bekommt hier schon die Predigt Jesu Heilsbedeutung, ein Gedanke, der bei Paulus fehlt. . ." (Hebräerbrief, p. 19).

²This passage gives little warrant for speculating how much the author of Hebrews knew or did not know about the life of Jesus. Grässer, in "Der historische Jesus," p. 68 n. 25, objects to the conclusion of Dibelius that "der Verfasser des Hebräerbriefs eine reiche Kenntnis des Lebens Jesu gehabt haben, die er von den 'persönlichen Jungern Jesu' empfangen habe" (from F. Dibelius, Der Verfasser des Hebräerbriefs, p. 18). Though Dibelius' statement is generally borne out by the personal testimony of the author of Hebrews (2:3b), to suggest the 'reicht' (ample) extent of that knowledge seems to be more than the passage allows.

Chapter 2

THE SON AND THE SONS (Hb. 2:5-18)

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THE SON AND THE SONS (Hb. 2:5-18)

I. Introduction

In his prologue (1:2) and following comparison of Jesus and the angels (1:4-2:4), the author of Hebrews stresses the significance of Jesus as Son. Indeed, throughout 1:1-2:4 the author portrays Jesus' dignity in the most exalted manner. This is particularly evident in 1:3f. and in the catena of OT quotations in 1:5-13. But clearly in 2:5-18 the author has altered his viewpoint and now regards Jesus (βλέπομεν Ἰησοῦν ; v.9) from a decidedly more earthly perspective, repeatedly and poignantly associating Jesus the Son with humankind--the many sons (v.10). The exalted Son of 1:1-2:4 is now, in contrast, portrayed as the humiliated suffering Jesus who "tasted death for all men" (v.9). The exalted connotations of the OT quotations in 1:5-13 (Ps. 2, 45, 110, 102) now yield to the humbler tones of Jesus the Son "made lower than the angels for a short time" (2:6-9; Ps. 8) and identified with men--his brethren and children (2:12-13; Ps. 22, Isa. 8).

It would appear, therefore, that in this passage the author of Hebrews makes reference to Jesus' earthly life, exposing its meaning for his readers. This feature of Hb. 2:5-18 has, in fact, been noted by virtually all interpreters when confronting this passage. As A. S. Peake comments: "The underlying thought of the whole section 2:5-18 is the identification of Jesus with mankind."¹ In the

¹Peake, Hebrews, p. 98.

following investigation, attention will be focused on those specific aspects of this passage which will contribute to a greater understanding of the nature and significance of Jesus' earthly life for the author of Hebrews.

II. Psalm 8 and Christology in Hb. 2

In 2:9 the author reiterates two phrases previously cited in 2:7 from Psalm 8: βραχύ τι παρ' ἀγγέλους ἡλαττωμένον ; δόξη καὶ τιμῇ ἑστεφανωμένον . The striking application of these phrases from Ps. 8 to Jesus in Hb. 2:9 cannot pass unnoted.

There is little question concerning the original intention of the Hebrew psalm.¹ In Ps. 8 the poet observes in wonderment the special role of man in God's creation, reflecting upon God's original intention (Gen. 1-2) for man that he should exercise dominion over all creation.² Indeed, "the psalm is a panegyric on man . . . , but

¹It is perhaps interesting to note that Luther saw only Christian doctrine in Ps. 8. He sums up his treatment of the psalm by noting this: "Thus the Holy Spirit through the prophet David instructs us . . . about the following topics: Christ; the two natures in Christ . . . ; Christ's dominion and kingdom . . . ; Christ's humiliation, suffering, and death; and of Christ's resurrection, exaltation and glorification." Luther's Works, XII, ed. J. Pelikan (St. Louis, 1955), p. 135.

²C. H. Dodd, According to the Scriptures (London, 1952), p. 131, notes that Ps. 8, in its original intention, is "a poem upon a startling contrast between man's position in the universe as lord of creation and his insignificance in the sight of God, the contradiction being resolved by the recognition that man is whatever he may be, solely as the object of God's care, and because God willed it so: his littleness and his greatness alike testify to the glory of God." H. L. Strack and P. Billerbeck, Kommentar zum N.T. aus Talmud und Midrash, III (Munich, 1926), p. 681, note that the rabbis taught that the angels used the words of Ps. 8:5 as a complaint to God against man when Moses went up to receive the law at Mt. Sinai. J. Héring, Hebrews, p. 15 n.5, also notes that "according to the Midrash Bereshit Rabba 8:6 . . . it is angels who uttered the words reported in Ps. 8:5 . . . to express their astonishment that so much fuss should be made of Adam." H. Ringgren, The Messiah in the Old Testament (London, 1956), p. 20, supposes that while the words of this psalm appear to speak of mankind or Adam, they indeed may have been spoken of a king. Regardless, the psalmist has here referred back to the Genesis myth and the privilege of dominion conferred upon Adam by God.

with a religious note of wonder and gratitude to God."¹

It is commonly observed that when the author of Hebrews cited Ps. 8, he cites the LXX translation which contains some noteworthy changes from the original Hebrew: $\square \cdot \eta \delta \epsilon \lambda$ translated by $\acute{\alpha}γγέλους$,² and $\beta\rho\alpha\chi\acute{\upsilon} \tau\iota$ given for the Hebrew equivalent עליו .³ The most crucial for Hebrews appears to be the rather ambiguous $\beta\rho\alpha\chi\acute{\upsilon} \tau\iota$, which should, unlike the original psalm, be understood temporally.⁴ This curious

¹Moffatt, Hebrews, p. 22.

² $\square \cdot \eta \delta \epsilon \lambda$ commonly indicates God in the OT, however it is ambiguous in Hebrew and the LXX occasionally rendered it as \wedge (cf. Ps. 97:7; 138:1; and 82:1,6). See H. Ringgren, " $\square \cdot \eta \delta \epsilon \lambda$," TDOT, 1, ed. G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren, trans. J. T. Willis (Grand Rapids, 1974), pp. 267-284 (esp. p. 282). Though it may be debatable whether the Psalmist intended "God," "gods," or "angels," Hebrews' author probably did not quibble about that, but found that the LXX reference to "angels" worked well into his argument.

³The expression $\text{ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου}$ should also be noted. Whether Hb. was influenced by the rather fortuitous occurrence of this christological title seems to me doubtful. If the author of Hebrews was deeply concerned with this bit of the psalm 8 quotation, why does he not comment further on it? Instead, he passes over it and never again makes reference to it. H. Windisch, Hebräerbrief, p. 20, writes that "für unsern Verfasser war nicht $\text{ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου}$ entscheidend (diesen Geheimnamen verwertet er nie), sondern die zweite Hälfte des Zitats." A. J. B. Higgins, Jesus and The Son of Man (London, 1964), p. 147, suggests that "although the author of Hebrews stresses the real humanity of Jesus, he never used the term Son of Man in this connection, except in citing Ps. 8 in order to illustrate his theme of exaltation after humiliation." See also P. Giles, "The Son of Man in the Epistle to the Hebrews," ET 86 (1975), p. 328-32; E. Grässer, "Beobachtungen zum Menschensohn in Hebr. 2:6," in Jesus und der Menschensohn, ed. R. Pesch and R. Schnackenburg (Freiburg, 1975), pp. 404-14; and C. F. D. Moule, "Neglected Features in the Problem of the Son of Man," in Neues Testament und Kirche, Fest. für R. Schnackenburg (Freiburg, 1974), pp. 413-28 (esp. p. 419f.). Grässer, p. 410, comments that "der Verfasser des Hebr. den Menschensohn von V. 6 nicht titular versteht, sondern als exemplarischen Menschen."

⁴The term $\beta\rho\alpha\chi\acute{\upsilon} \tau\iota$ (עליו) may be taken either temporally ("a short time") or of degree of status ("a little lower"). Though the psalmist likely understood it of degree of status, it appears most likely that Hb., in light of the context, took it temporally. In the argument of chapter 2 the idea of the brevity of Christ's humiliation has significance, while the idea of the tiny degree of inferiority in status beneath the angels has no point of importance in Hb. 2. This is the point of A. S. Peake, Hebrews, p. 99: "The assertion of the slightness of the inferiority has no place in the argument, whereas

ambiguity in the Greek, which permits the temporal sense ("for a short time lower"), facilitates our author's re-interpretation of the psalm then as a witness to the past humiliation and subsequent exaltation of Jesus.¹ This christological identification of Jesus as the object of the 'lowering' and 'crowning' first becomes explicit at verse 9, as the first reference to "Jesus" occurring in close connexion with the two key phrases from Ps. 8 clearly reveals. The object and sense of the psalm is less explicit in verses 6-8.² At this point, however,

the assertion of its brevity is a real point, since it looks forward to its speedy termination." C. Spicq, L'Épître aux Hébreux, II (Paris, 1953), p. 32, also comments that "de telle sorte qu'il doit entendre βαρυτί (βαρυτί) 'légèrement, à peine,' non de la distance ou de la qualité, mais de la durée quelque temps, brièvement." See also the comments of F. Bleek, Der Brief an die Hebräer, II 1 (Berlin, 1836), pp. 250ff.; J. Moffatt, Hebrews, p. 23; and G. W. Buchanan, Hebrews, p. 27.

¹"It appears that by the change in word order in the repetition of 2:7a the author intends to place βαρυτί (2:9) in a brighter light. . . . Due to the emphasis the author has placed upon the construction of 2:9, it is incontestably clear that he wishes to explicate the status exinanitionis and the status exaltationis of Jesus. . . . It was but a short time that he experienced his 'being made lower than the angels.'" S. Kistemaker, The Psalm Citations in the Epistle to the Hebrews (Amsterdam, 1961), p. 105. G. Hughes, Hebrews and Hermeneutics (Cambridge, 1980), p. 83, notes that 'though the LXX translation permits the sequential ordering of the 'little lower than the angels' and 'crowned with glory and honour' statements of the psalm, it by no means requires it. The obvious implication is that in so construing it, the writer is reading it quite unambiguously in the light of his understanding of the humiliation and exaltation of Jesus." See also B. Childs, "Ps. 8 in the Context of the Christian Canon," Int 23 (1969), p. 26, where he states: "The psalm becomes a christological proof-text for the Son of Man who for a short time was humiliated, but who was then exalted by God to become the representative for every man."

²Indeed, it is questionable whether the Ps. 8 citation in Hb. 2:6-8 should be understood to refer to humanity (man-in-general) or specifically to Christ. Cf. A. S. Peake, Hebrews, pp. 97ff. Regardless of one's interpretation of vv. 6-8 on this point, there can be no doubt that in v. 9 the reiteration of the Ps. 8 references applies to Jesus. The αὐτῷ of v. 8 is particularly troublesome, though I think one best preserves the contrast at v. 9 (τὸν δὲ . . . βλέπομεν ἵνα ἴσθῃ) by taking the preceding verses as primarily referring to mankind. C. F. D. Moule argues that "it seems best to take "man" . . . and "the son of man" . . . in Ps. 8 . . . as intended by the writer of Hebrews to mean humanity." We should then understand that strong contrast here; mankind has not attained to his divinely intended

our interest is to underline the fact that the author uses Ps. 8 to witness to the familiar NT humiliation-exaltation pattern,¹ which functions at 2:9 as the christological framework within which the author alludes to Jesus' "suffering of death" and "tasting death" (πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου ; γεύσεται θανάτου).²

Attention must also be drawn to the theme of the subjection of all things to "him."³ While Hb. 2:6-8a comments upon humankind's divinely intended destiny of dominion over all things (v.8a), the author remains realistic enough to admit that "we do not yet see all things having been subjected to him" (νῦν δὲ οὐπω ὁρῶμεν αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα ὑποτετάγμένα).⁴ In this frank admission something of the

destiny, while Jesus does in fact attain that ideal. Moule goes on to say Jesus does realise that ideal "inclusively and on behalf of the rest of mankind." C. F. D. Moule, The Phenomenon of the New Testament: An Inquiry into the Implications of Certain Features of the New Testament (London, 1967), p. 32f.

¹It is universally acknowledged that the κατάβασις - ἀνάβασις theme functions as a key category of NT christological thought (e.g., Phil. 2:6-11; Jn. 1:1-18; 3:13; 6:62; 1 Pt. 3:18-22).

²See J. D. G. Dunn's discussion of the christology of Hb. 2:6-9 in his recent book, Christology in the Making: An Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation (London, 1980), esp. pp. 110f, 117, 127, and 208f.

³Both 1 Cor. 15:20-28 and Hb. 2:5-9 make reference to Ps. 8 and emphasize the theme of subjection (note the key word ὑποτάσσω in both passages). One must note the conceptual similarity in these two passages: God acts, subjects, and controls; man is unable to fulfill the destiny for which he was created; Christ however does fulfill the promise of Ps. 8 and rules over all, even death.

⁴O. Michel, Der Brief an die Hebräer I (Göttingen, 1949), pp. 32f., comments: "Die mit V.8 einsetzende Auslegung schliesst an das letzte Glied an (πάντα ὑπέταξας) und geht dann auf die vorangehenden Sätze ein (ἡλάντωσας ; ἐστεφάνωσας). Dabei ergibt sich, dass die Gegenwart zwischen der noch nicht erfüllten Weltherrschaft und der schon geschehenen Erniedrigung und Erhöhung liegt. Das Christus-Zeugnis des Psalms berichtet darum von einem Drama, dessen Schlussakt noch aussteht. V.8 οὐπω ist ebenso eschatologische wie das grosse οὐπω in 1 Jn. 3:2." Cf. O. Michel, Der Brief an die Hebräer (Göttingen, 1975), pp. 138f.

situation of the readers is revealed. The readers are struggling 'between times,' so to speak, in an eschatological interval, knowing that God has already spoken the eschatological word of salvation in His Son (1:1-4; 2:2-3) and yet finding themselves agonizingly subject to earthly struggles and persecution.¹ Thus is revealed Hebrews' characteristic eschatological tension between the 'already' and the 'not-yet.' That eschatological perspective manifests itself in paraenetic form when the author of Hebrews introduces Jesus, one who was "made lower for a short time" and then subsequently "crowned with glory and honour." The author thus intimates to his readers that Jesus' followers too may be assured of their future "crowning," though they must yet suffer a "short time" (βραχύ τι) of painful and uncertain humility. When the author sees man, he sees him in light of the Man, Jesus, man as he was meant to be. As the path to glory for Jesus led through suffering, so also man must perceive his divinely intended goal as attained through the painful but perfecting path of suffering. The readers of Hebrews may discover genuine encouragement to hold firmly to their faith, knowing that the "pioneer of their salvation" (2:10) has already blazed a trail through the same wilderness of humiliation and suffering in which they now struggle--and emerged "crowned with glory and honour," lifted up as a portent of things to come for his followers.

III. Jesus' Passion (Hb. 2:9)

The crux interpretum Hb. 2:9 is a passage fraught with interpretational difficulties and ambiguities. While there is unanimous agreement that "Jesus" is now clearly the object of the author's vision, little interpretational consensus exists on much else in v.9.

¹Cf. 2:14-18.

A. Grammatical Analysis of 2:9

The primarily grammatical enigma is the proper relation of the four clauses to one another. To facilitate discussion here these clauses will be referred to in their order as follows: (1) βραχύ τι παρ' ἀγγέλους ἡλαττωμένον ; (2) διὰ τὸ πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου ; (3) δόξῃ καὶ τιμῇ ἐστεφανωμένον ; and (4) ὅπως χάριτι θεοῦ ὑπὲρ παντὸς γεύσεται θανάτου. Two issues are most critical to a proper conception of the relationship between these clauses.

First, should clause 2 be connected in sense to clause 1 or 3? While certain of the Greek fathers and other ancient commentators¹ took clause 2 with 1, it appears probable that clause 2 should be taken with clause 3 for the following reasons. Clause 2 is distinctly (and probably with intention) separated from clause 1 by the emphatic assertion βλέπομεν Ἰησοῦν. Thus it appears better to take clause 2 with what follows uninterrupted in clause 3. In addition, the author speaks of "suffering" again in the immediately following verse (2:10). There he connects it to the "perfecting" of Jesus as the ἀρχηγός of salvation. Hence in this context suffering and exaltation, not degradation, are immediately and intimately connected in the author's thought. It seems likely then that clause 2 must not be connected with clause 1, but rather with clause 3.²

¹See F. Bleek, Hebräer, II 1, esp. pp. 265ff., for a summary of relevant references. J. Moffatt, Hebrews, p. 24, notes that while διὰ τὸ πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου must refer to the death of Jesus himself, it would be a mistake to construe (as these ancient commentators did) the fact of his death as the occasion for the 'lowering.'

²"The words are not to be joined with ἡλαττωμένον either in the sense (1) that in this lay His humiliation, or (2) that this was the aim of His humiliation." B. F. Westcott, Hebrews, p. 45. One might also note that if Bengel's understanding of these four clauses as a chiasm is accepted (which there is no grammatical reason for supposing), it too would support the linking of the two inner elements (clauses 2 and 3). See J. A. Bengel, Gnomon of the New Testament, IV, 7th ed., trans. J. Bryce, rev. and ed. A. R. Fausset (Edinburgh, 1857-8), pp. 355f.

Few today would disagree with the above relation of clause 2 to 3, however there is less unity of opinion when one asks how clause 2 is related to 3. The argument hinges upon the way the preposition ($\delta\iota\alpha$) with the accusative ($\tau\acute{o} \pi\acute{\alpha}\theta\eta\mu\alpha \tau\omicron\upsilon \theta\alpha\nu\acute{\alpha}\tau\omicron\upsilon$) is conceived. Some contend that $\delta\iota\alpha$ with the accusative must be taken in what A. Nairne calls a "forward sense,"¹ that Jesus' 'crowning'² was "for the purpose of" or "in reference to" the (prospective) suffering of death.³ While there is some ambiguity grammatically as to the precise way to take $\delta\iota\alpha$ with the accusative,⁴ the argument for this 'forward sense' or 'prospective sense' appears somewhat strained here at Hb. 2:9. Rather, the primary sense of 'cause' or 'ground' for $\delta\iota\alpha$ with the accusative, the dominant sense in Greek, appears most likely here.⁵

¹A. Nairne, The Epistle to the Hebrews (Cambridge, 1917), p. 43, writes: "The presupposition has its 'forward' sense, 'crowned for the purpose of,' not 'in recompense for' death."

²Some commentators see in this a reference to Jesus' baptism or transfiguration which in some sense qualified Jesus for the coming efficacious suffering of death. See M. Dods, "The Epistle to the Hebrews," The Expositor's Greek Testament IV, ed. W. R. Nicoll (London, 1910), p. 263; also F. Rendall, The Epistle to the Hebrews (London, 1883), p. 18, who suggests that Jesus was "invested with a preincarnate glory," i.e., crowned for death (prospective).

³As well as A. Nairne, A. B. Bruce, The Epistle to the Hebrews--The First Apology for Christianity (Edinburgh, 1908), pp. 80-83, vigorously argues that the "crowning" is antecedent to the "suffering of death," that there was an "exaltation latent in the humiliation" and that Jesus was "crowned for death."

⁴While the grammars do generally mention the possibility of taking $\delta\iota\alpha$ with the accusative in a 'prospective' sense (object or purpose), the dominant sense is that of the 'ground' (ratio), not the purpose. See F. Blass and A. Debrunner, A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, trans. R. W. Funk (Chicago, 1961), p. 119; C. F. D. Moule, An Idiom-Book of New Testament Greek (Cambridge, 1963), pp. 54f.; A. T. Robertson, A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research (New York, 1914), pp. 583f.; and G. B. Winer, A Treatise on the Grammar of New Testament Greek, trans. W. F. Moulton (Edinburgh, 1870), p. 32.

⁵This position is supported by Luther, Calvin, Bengel, Delitzsch, F. F. Bruce, C. Spicq, et al. F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 39, writes: "The phrase 'because of the suffering of death' more naturally

We shall return below more specifically to the significance of διὰ τὸ πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου . It suffices now to say that clause 2 should go with clause 3 and that διὰ with the accusative should be taken here as indicating that Jesus' suffering of death is the ground or cause for the "crowning," not its future objective.

The second and rather more thorny grammatical difficulty in 2:9 concerns the relation of clause 4 to the preceding clauses.

While ὥπως with a subjunctive (γεύσῃται) probably expresses purpose ("in order that he might taste"),¹ it still remains uncertain how clause 4 relates to the rest of v.9. Indeed, there seems to be no end of possibilities here, and the diversity of opinion is vast.²

suggests that the crowning followed the suffering as its divinely appointed end than that the crowning took place with a view to the suffering of death." C. Spicq, Hébreux, I, p. 33, writes: "Or ces honneurs et cette gloire actuels et célestes lui ont été attribués comme récompense, litt. 'en retour' de la passion qu'il a victorieusement supportée (διὰ avec l'acc., 'à cause de'; cf. Ro. 4:25; Gal. 4:13; Apoc. 12:11)."

¹The grammars traditionally term this a 'final clause' which is more often rendered in the NT by ἵνα . See the comments of Blass-Debrunner, Greek Grammar, pp. 186f.; C. F. D. Moule, Idiom-Book, pp. 138f.; and J. H. Moulton, A Grammar of New Testament Greek, III (Edinburgh, 1963), pp. 105f. Cf. Hb. 9:15.

²A general overview of the most notable solutions may be summarized as follows. (a) J. A. Bengel, Gnomon, 4, p. 356 (cf. P. E. Hughes, Hebrews, pp. 90f.), suggests a four clause chiasm in 2:9. Thus, clause 4 relates in sense to clause 1, linking the two outer clauses. Taken this way, clause 4 reflects the purpose of the 'lowering.' While this makes acceptable theological sense, this connexion seems highly unlikely. In fact, 11 words do separate the two clauses and there seems to be no sound grammatical reason for connecting them. Furthermore, it remains sheer speculation to suppose a chiasm here at all. (b) A variation of the first option is that of J. C. O'Neill, "Hebrews 2:9," JThS 17 (1966), pp. 79-82, who, because of his firm preference for the variant reading χωρὶς θανάτου , concludes that clause 4 is a marginal gloss on clause 1. (c) J. Moffatt, Hebrews, pp. 24f., suggests that clause 4 is epexegetical of clause 2, "gathering up the full object and purpose of the experience which has just been predicted of Jesus" (i.e., his suffering of death). Cf. J. Hering, Hebrews, pp. 16f.; and A. B. Davidson, The Epistle to the Hebrews (Edinburgh, 1882), pp. 58f. (d) F. Delitzsch, Hebrews, I, p. 113, asserts " . . . the only right construction of the clause is to make it refer to the whole participial predicate" (i.e., clause 4 relates to the combined

But while allowing a certain degree of interpretational latitude, a probable understanding of the clauses in 2:9 should be proposed in light of what has been said above.

If, as argued above, Jesus' "suffering of death" expresses the ground or cause for (διὰ) the subsequent "crowning with glory and honour," this "crowning" necessarily implies some sort of post-mortem confirmation by God of Jesus.¹ However one interprets this "crowning," the problem then lies with the logic of speaking about Jesus' "tasting death for all" after the "crowning." Stylistically it seems clause 4 should be most closely related to clause 3. This is the most natural

thought of all the preceding three clauses). F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 39, following B. F. Westcott, Hebrews, p. 46, also supports this view that clause 4 expresses the purpose of the whole sequence of the preceding events--taking Christ's humiliation, passion, and glory as a unit. (e) However, in 2:9 the ὅπως clause relates grammatically and in sense most naturally with the immediately preceding clause (δόξῃ καὶ τιμῇ ἐστεφανωμένον). See the text above for this position which is supported by C. Spicq, Hébreux, II, p. 34; H. Alford, The Greek Testament, IV, p. 41; and H. Montefiore, Hebrews, p. 58. See also the comments of F. Bleek, Hebräer, II, pp. 265-75. H. Windisch, Der Hebräerbrief (Tubingen, 1931), pp. 20f., notes that "vom Nebensatz aus gesehen sind die vorausgehenden Worte δόξῃ καὶ τιμῇ ἐστεφανωμένον störend; streicht man sie, . . . wird der Texte etwas glatter; richtiger ist es vielleicht, eine Lücke zu vermuten."

¹It has already been argued above that the so-called forward or prospective sense of διὰ τὸ πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου is unlikely. It appears more likely that the "crowning" refers to the exaltation/ascension of Jesus to the right hand of God the Father. See A. B. Davidson, Hebrews, p. 59; O. Michel, Hebräer (1975), pp. 139-142; F. Delitzsch, Hebrews, I, p. 111; and C. Spicq, Hébreux, II, p. 34. In light of the Ps. 8 quotation and its concern with Lordship or dominion and also the author's preoccupation with Jesus' enthroned position in chapter 1 (note esp. Ps. 110:1), Jesus' enthronement at God's right hand appears as the likeliest possibility for "crowned with glory and honour." As well, Hb.' key concept of the Son's access to God--a source of encouragement to suffering believers--points to Jesus' intimate position at God's right hand. See further the article of R. Williamson, "The Background of the Epistle to the Hebrews," ET 87 (1976), pp. 232-38, where Williamson raises the possibility of "Merkabah-mysticism" being the Judaistic soil for Hb.' thought. He compares Hebrews with certain 'merkabah' influenced literature (e.g., 3 Enoch and Ecclesiasticus). His primary rationale for this thesis is that the atonement polemic--which Williamson takes to indicate direct access to God's presence--of Hb. is most compatible with this particular Jewish emphasis.

position and furthermore does indeed make good logical sense.¹ The crucially significant ὅπως must be remembered as expressing purpose. The author pointedly stresses the theological and soteriological intention or purpose of Jesus' death, a death rendered efficacious "for all" by his "crowning."² Thus the efficacy of Jesus' tasting of death "for all" depends upon the Father's "crowning" of Jesus. Without this post-mortem "crowning" of Jesus, his "suffering of death" would not have been effective ὑπὲρ πάντων.³ C. Spicq writes:

La résurrection du Christ fut la condition de l'application des fruits de la passion à tous les hommes. Si la mort avait gardé sa victime, elle aurait eu la victoire, et l'entreprise du salut aboutissait à un échec (cf. 1 Cor. 15:17-18). Le couronnement du Christ, au contraire, atteste la réussite de la rédemption. En d'autres termes l'efficacité salutaire de la mort de Jésus a été consommée, consacrée et en quelque sorte ratifiée par sa glorification. Celle-ci est un élément intégrant de la rédemption et permet au Christ dans son état de gloire d'appliquer aux hommes les effets du salut (Jo. 12:32).⁴

The ὑπὲρ πάντων character of the death of Jesus indicates the proper and logical relation of clause 4 to the "crowning" (clause 3). Thus the author observes that the purpose of the "crowning" is to

¹J. Hering's objection is typical of those many commentators who think that linking clause 4 to 3 in a natural way presents insurmountable problems of logic. J. Hering, Hebrews, p. 16, writes: "But how can death be envisaged as the aim of the coronation which it precedes?" See also the unsatisfactory treatment of this issue by J. Moffatt, Hebrews, pp. 24f.

²When this character of intention (ὑπὲρ πάντων) is properly marked, one preserves the natural sequential arrangement of the clauses in 2:9. It then becomes unnecessary to speculate unduly about chiasmic arrangements (Bengel), doubtful editorial glosses (O'Neill), or missing words (Windisch).

³"On the triumphant issue of his sufferings, their efficacy depends. . . . His glory was the consequence of his suffering of death; arrived at through his suffering; but the applicability of his death to every man is the consequence of His constitution in heaven as the great High Priest, in virtue of His blood carried into the holy place." H. Alford, The Greek Testament, IV (London, 1866), p. 41.

⁴C. Spicq, Hébreux, II, p. 34.

render Jesus' suffering and tasting of death, upon which the "crowning" is based, actually efficacious "for all."

Briefly stated, the clauses of Hb. 2:9 should be construed in the following manner. Clause 1 suggests the "lowered" human existence of Jesus (humiliation); clause 2 intimates that Jesus' "suffering of death" is the cause of Jesus' subsequent exalted ("crowned") existence (clause 3 - exaltation); clause 4 indicates that the intention or purpose of the "crowning" was to render, in a divinely mysterious way, Jesus' tasting of death efficacious "for all."

B. "We see Jesus"

As noted previously, in v.9 the author abruptly breaks off from saying what "we do not yet see" (οὐκ ὁρῶμεν . . . v.8) and dramatically introduces the one whom (τὸν δέ) "we do see" (βλέπομεν Ἰησοῦν). "Jesus" now is the clear object of their "seeing."¹

Though some interpreters feel that the name "Jesus" is almost superfluous here, merely a supplement (appositional) of τὸν δέ . . . ἡλαττωμένον,² this regards its dramatic introduction at this point in

¹Hebrews varies the verb for "seeing" in v.9 (βλέπω) from the preceding verse (ὁρῶ). A. S. Peake, Hebrews, p. 101 (cf. B. F. Westcott, Hebrews, p. 45), asserts that "the change from 'see' (v.8) to 'behold' is probably intentional, and the latter word perhaps carries us into the realm of the invisible, where faith is the organ of vision." See W. Bauer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, 4th ed., trans. W. F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich (Chicago, 1957), pp. 142f; W. Michaelis, "ὁρῶ," TDNT, V, ed. G. Friedrich, trans. G. W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, 1967), pp. 315-82; and also K. Dahn, "See," in The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, III, ed. C. Brown (Exeter, 1978), pp. 511-18. In all likelihood, the author has changed the verb (ὁρῶ to βλέπω) simply to accentuate the difference between what is and what is not "seen," with no particular significance given to the word βλέπω over against ὁρῶ.

²See the comments of G. Lünemann, Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Epistle to the Hebrews, Meyer's Comm. on the NT (Edinburgh, 1882), pp. 116f.; also H. Alford, Greek Testament, IV, pp. 37f. Lünemann writes that Ἰησοῦν might even have been left out without detriment to the sense and intelligibility of that which the author

the argument too lightly. The use of Jesus' human name here¹ cannot be superfluous, for it, in a stylistically emphatic way characteristic of the author,² plays a vital role in the argument, clearly focusing the readers' attention on the particular Man, Jesus.³ He desires it to be perfectly clear that he is now speaking of the particular man "Jesus" in connexion with what he has just cited from Ps. 8 concerning humankind. Though there can be no simple equation of the name "Jesus" with his humanity and earthly career, the predominant interest of the author in 2:9-18 is Jesus' identification as a man with humankind.⁴ Thus it can hardly be accidental or unintentional that his human name is used here, devoid of christological titles, to introduce Jesus forcefully into the argument.

would imply; it is nevertheless inserted, in order, by the express mention of his name, to cut off every kind of doubt upon the point that it is no other than Christ, the historic Redeemer, of whom the citation adduced, vv.6-8, is treating."

¹Notably this is the first time the name 'Jesus' is used in Hebrews. B. F. Westcott, Hebrews, p. 33, notes that of the names of Jesus occurring in Hb., "that which is distinctive of the Epistle is the human Name, Jesus." Cf. 2:9; 3:1; 6:20; 7:22; 10:19; 12:2, 24; 13:12; (4:14). See also E. F. Scott, The Epistle to the Hebrews, (Edinburgh, 1922), pp. 148f.

²B. F. Westcott, Hebrews, p. 33, writes: "It will be noted that in every case but 13:12 . . . the name 'Jesus' occupies an emphatic position at the end of the clause." See also J. Moffatt, Hebrews, p. 23, who notes that Ἰησοῦς "comes in with emphasis, as in 3:1 and 12:2, at the end of a preliminary definition." Such a regular stylistic feature does indeed indicate the author's intent to emphasize Ἰησοῦς by his placement.

³Westcott, Hebrews, p. 33, asserts that "in every case it (the name 'Jesus') furnishes the key to the argument of the passage where it is found."

⁴Ἰησοῦς hier zum erstenmal . . . vielleicht weil der Mensch zum erstenmal in seiner Niedrigkeit ins Auge gefasst wird." H. Windisch, Hebräerbrief, p. 20. E. Grässer, "Beobachtungen," p. 409, writes: "Dieser emphatische Gebrauch des Namens Jesu (ohne jeden Zusatz) ist beispiellos im übrigen Neuen Testament. Wir finden ihn im Hebr. aber häufiger. . . . Selbst wenn für diese Besonderheit des Hebr. primär der typologische Schriftsgebrauch ausschlaggebend sein sollte . . . so machen doch neben unserer Stelle vor allem 12:2 und 13:12 deutlich, dass damit besonders auf die Geschichtlichkeit und Menschlichkeit Jesu abgehoben ist."

C. Humiliation-Exaltation

We should not dwell overmuch in 2:9 on ontological speculations concerning Jesus' "lowering," for the author, in saying of Jesus what he just earlier said of mankind ("made lower than the angels for a short time", 2:7a), appears more likely to be simply saying, 'Jesus was a man.' The author does not concern himself in these words with speculation on the specifics of Jesus' basic identification as a man with men. The phrase βραχύ τι . . . ἡλαττωμένον does, however, suggest a concept of hierarchical order (God, Angels, Men) in which humankind is "lower" than the angels. Jesus, the author argues, existed at that "lower" human level, in solidarity with mankind and, by implication, all the peculiarities and problems which accompany man's "lowness."¹ This existence as a man with human frailties constitutes what theologians often refer to as the "humiliation of Christ."

It seems unwarranted to press from this phrase any intimation of the pre-existent divine status of Jesus. Indeed, even to speak of incarnation here is somewhat misleading, if by incarnation one implies a reduction in rank, a descent from a higher to a lower order, from the heavenly to the earthly sphere. The stress on Jesus "made lower than the angels" in this passage lies not upon some thought of a mysterious descent of the pre-existent Son from the heavenlies, but upon the simple fact of his manhood, his complete solidarity with mankind in its troublesome and precarious existence, albeit only for a short time.² While the author of Hebrews undoubtedly affirmed Jesus'

¹It cannot be unimportant that the same language used of man-in-general in the Ps. 8 quotation (Hb. 2:7a) now serves as well to describe Jesus. Clearly the idea of identification or solidarity is implied.

²If anything in this passage, the author is concerned with movement from a 'lower' status to a 'higher' one (humiliation-exaltation), not 'higher' to 'lower' and then back to 'higher' again. Fur-

pre-existence as a divine being (Hb. 1), he does not elaborate here upon Jesus' movement from that higher pre-existent status to the lower human status. For the author the matter of importance here is the certain fact that Jesus existed as a man.

The second participial phrase lifted from the Ps. 8 quotation points to Jesus being "crowned with glory and honour." Here lies the principal point of contrast between what "we do not yet see" (νῦν δὲ οὐπω ὁρῶμεν) in mankind, and what "we do see" (βλέπομεν) now in the one man Jesus. Mankind has, as is painfully obvious, not yet achieved his divinely intended destiny of glory and its coincident dominion as prophesied by the psalmist, but the man Jesus has been "crowned" (exaltation).¹

Thus, in the two participial phrases lifted from Ps. 8 the author presents Jesus first as a man in his humiliated status, and then as the man who has actually attained the exalted position God originally intended for him.

D. Jesus' Suffering of Death

While the author does not contemplate "how" Jesus was "lowered," he does however show a distinct interest in "how" Jesus proceeded from his position of humiliation to exaltation. In response to this concern the author inserts the crucial explanatory clause

ther, in this particular phrase (βραχύ τι . . . ἡλαττωμένον) the author is not concerned with the how of Jesus' manhood, but rather with the fact that he was a man. He does not envision the process of Jesus' "lowering."

¹It is difficult to know whether the "subjection of all things under his feet" coincides with his being "crowned with glory and honour." "Crowning," we have already suggested, might refer to Jesus' presence at the right hand of God (cf. 1:3, 13). Such a position implies lordship or dominion; but what that means precisely shall perhaps remain indefinite. The point of contrast is this: mankind has not yet been crowned nor attained lordship over all things, but in Jesus we do see one crowned and in a position of dominion over all things.

διὰ τὸ πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου . Here at this significant juncture he appeals to Jesus' earthly experience as a man. As noted above,¹ this prepositional phrase points to the cause or ground of Jesus' "crowning with glory and honour;" it does not indicate the occasion for (object of) Jesus' "lowering."

The phrase πάθημα² τοῦ θανάτου could simply suggest Jesus' "death," a tautologous expression for the fact of death itself. However, the author did not simply write θάνατος , but rather spoke specifically of his πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου . For the author, Jesus' death possesses a context of suffering.³ The author duplicates this rather vivid and concrete manner of speaking of Jesus' death again later in 2:9 with a reference to Jesus "tasting death" (γεύσεται θανάτου). Thus, in this rather stark (in terms of historical details), yet emphatic and concrete manner, the author presents a clear reference to the hard reality of Jesus' existence as a man.

¹See above, p. 30.

²The singular form πάθημα is unique in the NT here; its plural form is far more common. W. Michaelis, "πάσχω," TDNT, V, ed. G. Friedrich, trans. G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, 1967), pp. 904-939 (esp. pp. 930-35). For Michaelis, πάθημα here in 2:9 and again in its plural form in 2:10 refers to the suffering which consists in death; for Michaelis παθεῖν = "to die." Note the frequent use of the παθεῖν word group in Hb: 2:9, 10, 18; 5:8; 9:26; 13:12 (all of Jesus); cf. 10:32 (of believers).

³Along this line C. Spicq, Hébreux, II, p. 33, comments: "Westcott souligne que le mérite est attaché moins au fait historique de la mort (διὰ τὸ πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου) qu'à la nature même de la souffrance." It is uncertain, however, just what Westcott meant when he said the stress is laid not on the death of Jesus, but upon the "nature of the suffering itself" (Hebrews, pp. 45f.). Apparently Spicq and Westcott prefer to talk about a "fatal suffering," as it were, over the simple idea of "death" (Michaelis). H. Montefiore, Hebrews, p. 58, addresses this point also: "He was not crowned because he had to suffer death, but because he had died suffering. The emphasis is on Jesus' suffering unto death rather than on the fact of the death itself."

Further, the vital role played by διὰ τὸ πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου in the author's argument must not be overlooked. This reference to Jesus' earthly life is the hinge upon which the argument turns. It is the focal point of this passage. H. Zimmermann rightly asserts,

Aber nicht darauf liegt der Akzent der Aussage, dass der Erniedrigte jetzt der Erhohte ist, und schon gar nicht darauf, dass wir den Erhöhten sehen; vielmehr kommt alles auf die mit διὰ τὸ πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου ausgesprochene Begründung an: Um seines Todesleiden willen ist Jesus erhöht worden.¹

That this is so is even suggested by the positioning of the phrase itself. Crucially juxtaposed between the two clauses cited from Ps. 8, it forms the bridge between Jesus' humiliation and his exaltation. This reference to Jesus' "suffering of death" is hence integral to the sense of the author's argument.² J. C. O'Neill rightly perceives that

this phrase is designed to show the inner connexion, in the mind of God, between Act 1 and Act 2 of the drama; διὰ τὸ πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου provides the reason why God crowned with glory and honour the one who was made lower than the angels. Furthermore, that reason is the necessary starting point for the writer's next argument, contained in v.10, that it was fitting for God to perfect the pioneer of men's salvation through suffering.³

Thus, at this crucial point in the argument, the concrete figure of the man Jesus and his earthly experience forms the foundation upon which everything depends for the author of Hebrews. Jesus' πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου is the climax of the whole passage 2:5-9. Not to angels has the world to come been subjected, nor has mankind yet attained to his divinely intended glory and dominion, but the one man

¹H. Zimmermann, Das Bekenntnis der Hoffnung: Tradition und Redaktion im Hebräerbrief (Köln, 1977), p. 159.

²"Nun sehen wir aber an Jesus nicht bloss Erniedrigung und Erhöhung aufeinander folgen, sondern wir sehen auch den inneren Zusammenhang zwischen beiden." A. Schlatter, Erläuterungen zum Neuen Testament, 9 (Stuttgart, 1928), pp. 206f.

³J. C. O'Neill, "Hebrews 2:9," JTS 17 (1966), p. 81.

Jesus has been "crowned" precisely because of his suffering of death.

The primary part of the clause, γεύσεται θανάτου , alludes again to the passion of Jesus. The expression γεύεσθαι θανάτου is used elsewhere in the NT of other men¹ and is best understood as an idiomatic expression meaning to "experience death." Though there have been various suggestions concerning the precise connotations of this phrase,² J. Behm's comments itself most:

The formula γεύεσθαι + θανάτου . . . , Hb. 2:9 ('to experience death as what it is'), like ἰδεῖν or θεωρεῖν θάνατον (Hb. 11:5; Lk. 2:26; Jn. 8:51), is a graphic expression of the hard and painful reality of dying which is experienced by man and which was suffered by Jesus (cf. Hb. 2:9 τὸ πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου).³

The author of Hebrews, by describing Jesus' death in this vivid fashion, again underlines the concrete reality of Jesus' experience of death.

¹Cf. Mk. 9:1; Mt. 16:28; Lk. 9:27; Jn. 8:52. It is not however found anywhere in the LXX.

²Perhaps most famous is Chrysostom's curious understanding of γεύσεται to indicate the brief duration of Jesus' experience of death. "Moreover he said in strict propriety of expression taste death for every man, he did not say die. For as if He really was tasting it, when He had spent a little time therein, He immediately arose." J. Chrysostom, The Homilies of S. John Chrysostom Archbishop of Constantinople on the Epistle of S. Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews, A Library of the Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church, Anterior to the Division of the East and West (Oxford, 1877), p. 51 (Hom. IV, 3). Chrysostom's view verges on docetism and runs clearly contrary to Hebrews' emphasis on the realism of Jesus' death and suffering. J. Moffatt, Hebrews, p. 26, rightly observes that γεύσεται ought not to be understood as an echo of βραχύ τι . Also interesting is the suggestion of C. Spicq, Hébreux, II, pp. 34f.: "Il est fait possible que Hebr. ait choisi ce terme par référence au calice de l'agonie (Lc. 22:42; cf. Hebr. 5:7)." There is no way of proving or disproving this, though it does appear unlikely in light of the expression's use in common idiom.

³J. Behm, "γεύομαι," TDNT, I, ed. G. Kittel, trans. G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, 1964), p. 677.

The crucial prepositional phrase ὑπὲρ παντός¹ gives the ὅπως clause in 2:9 a relational force. All men (πάντός)² now enter view as those "for" whom Jesus might taste death. Likely this ὑπέρ - formula finds its roots in a confession of the primitive church which reaches back to the earliest levels of Christian catechetical traditions (the simple form would be Paul's statement, Χριστὸς ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἀπέθανεν, Ro. 5:8).³ But regardless of the precise origins of the ὑπέρ -formula linked to Jesus' death, "for all" interprets Jesus' death as a special act which somehow affects "all men." But here at Hb. 2:9 the precise way (sacrificial concept) Jesus' death effectively and beneficially applies to all men is left unexplained.⁴ It is

¹H. Zimmermann, Das Bekenntnis der Hoffnung, pp. 159f., notes this: "Der Ton liegt zweifellos auf den ὑπὲρ παντός (= ὑπὲρ πάντων; vgl. 1 Tim. 2:6): Christus hat den Tod für alle gekostet." Marcus Dods, Expositor's Greek Testament, IV, p. 263, also notes that the words ὑπὲρ παντός "are the emphatic words, bringing out the writer's point that Christ's victory and supremacy were not for Himself alone, but for men."

²Πάντός could grammatically as well as theologically be taken as neuter. The Greek fathers (notably Origen, Theodoret, and Oecumenius) evidently did hold the view of πάντός as neuter and referred it to the whole universe and especially the angels--e.g., οὐ μόνον ὑπὲρ ἀνθρωπῶν ἀλλὰ καὶ ὑπὲρ τῶν ἄνω δυνάμεων ἀπέθανεν (Oecumenius). See the comments of B. F. Westcott, Hebrews, p. 46; J. Hering, Hebrews, p. 17; C. Spicq, Hebreux, II, p. 35; J. Moffatt, Hebrews, p. 26; and A. B. Davidson, Hebrews, p. 59. However, since Hebrews' chief concern is Jesus' relationship to mankind here (cf. 2:16), the masculine ("mankind") must be preferred.

³See H. Riesenfeld, "ὑπέρ," TDNT VIII, ed. G. Friedrich, trans. G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, 1972), pp. 507-16. Riesenfeld (pp. 510f.) suggests that the earliest stage of the ὑπέρ-formula with a personal reference in the statement about the death of Jesus is in the logion which has parallels in both a Pauline passage (1 Cor. 11:24) and two synoptic passages (Mk. 14:24; Lk. 22:19f)--the cup saying.

⁴The question of 'how?' has been the source of some debate over the years. Opposing a noted interpretation of J. Chrysostom, J. Calvin, The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews and the First and Second Epistles of St. Peter, Calvin's Commentaries, trans. W. B. Johnston (Edinburgh, 1963 (1549)), p. 24, writes: "When he says for every man, he does not mean that He should be an example to others, in the way that Chrysostom adduces the metaphor of a physician

significant to note that while the author in 2:9 identifies Jesus with mankind, in divinely intended destiny and earthly human condition, this ὑπέρ-formula also clearly sets Jesus over against men. Only his is a death which can be said to be "for all."

E. Textual Notes in 2:9

There appears to be little basis for choosing the textual variant χωρίς θεοῦ over the better attested and contextually acceptable reading χάριτι θεοῦ.¹ For the author, God's grace forms the

who takes the first sip of a bitter draught, so that the sick man will not refuse to drink it. He means that Christ died for us, because He took on Himself our lot, and redeemed us from the curse of death." B. F. Westcott, Hebrews, p. 46, simply notes that ὑπέρ ought to be translated as "in behalf of," not "in place of." In a similar vein, H. Alford, The Greek Testament, IV, p. 40, comments that ὑπέρ should be translated as 'on behalf of' or 'for the benefit of,' noting also that the idea of vicariousness should not be introduced: "The whole argument (proceeds) not on the vicariousness of Christ's sacrifice, but on the benefits which we derive from His personal suffering for us in humanity; not on His substitution for us, but on His community with us."

¹The weight of the textual evidence plus the demands of the context point to χάριτι θεοῦ. The most likely explanation for the variant χωρίς θεοῦ is that it is the gloss of a later scribe upon either πάντος of v.9 or the οὐδὲν ἀφῆκεν αὐτῷ ἀνυπότακτον of v.8, slipping into the text at a later date. Cf. 1 Cor. 15:27. The argument for χωρίς θεοῦ rests upon the principle of difficilior lectio potior and the preferred (by some) theological sense that Jesus died 'separated from' God--echoing Jesus' cry of dereliction in the gospel accounts. See the comments of O. Michel, Hebräer (1975), pp. 139f. However, in light of the greater textual attestation and contextually excellent sense of χάριτι θεοῦ, χωρίς θεοῦ must be rejected. See B. Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament (London, 1971), p. 664; also J. Moffatt, Hebrews, pp. 26f.; P. E. Hughes, Hebrews, pp. 94-97; B. F. Westcott, Hebrews, p. 46; and C. Spicq, Hébreux, I, p. 419 ("Il faut néanmoins la rejeter résolument tant au point de vue de la critique du texte que la contexte.") The variant χωρίς θεοῦ is vigorously advocated by others: cf. H. Montefiore, Hebrews, pp. 58f.; G. Zuntz, The Text of the Epistles (London, 1953), pp. 34f., 44; J. C. O'Neill, "Hebrews 2:9," pp. 79-82; J. K. Elliott, "When Jesus was Apart from God: an Examination of Hebrews 2:9," ExpT 33 (1971-2), pp. 339-41; A. von Harnack, Studien zur Geschichte des Neuen Testament, I (Berlin, 1931), pp. 235f.

background against which Jesus' death "for all" is placed. Indeed, the author roots the efficacy of Jesus' death "for all" ultimately in the grace of God. As C. Spicq says, " χάριτι θεοῦ insiste sur l'initiative divine du salut universel."¹ As well χάριτι θεοῦ leads smoothly into the argument of the following verse, ἔπρεπεν γὰρ αὐτῷ (θεῷ).

IV. Ἰησοῦς Ἀρχηγός (2:10)

In vv.5-9 the author has indicated the relationship of the Son Jesus to men, a relationship which found expression in Jesus' suffering of death "for all men." In vv.10-18 the author elaborates upon this relationship between the Son and the sons. As will be seen, throughout this entire section (10-18) the author of Hebrews returns repeatedly to Jesus' earthly life and experience as the critical element which gives form to this relationship of Jesus and men.

The initial comment of the author in v.10 (ἔπρεπεν γὰρ αὐτῷ)² suggests that what follows is perfectly congruent with God's nature and will. It is a "suitable," "fitting," or "appropriate" action for such a God to take. The ascription δι' ὃν τὰ πάντα καὶ δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα is a circumlocution for God.³ But to speak of what "it behoved" God (not men) to do is unique in the Bible to Hebrews.⁴ In this singular

¹C. Spicq, Hébreux, I, p. 419.

²The word ἔπρεπεν, also used at Hb. 7:26, is most commonly translated 'fitting' (RSV, NEB, NASB, NIV), though also rendered by such expressions as 'become' (AV, RV), 'appropriate' (JB), 'right' (GNB), and 'right and proper' (Phillips). Cf. δεῖ (2:1), ὠφείλεν (2:17), and ἔπρεπεν again in 7:26.

³This could be used of Christ, but it seems unlikely that the author here speaks of Christ perfecting himself through suffering. Cf. Ro. 11:36; 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16; Jn. 1:3, 10 for similar expression.

⁴C. Spicq, in his section on Philonisms (Hébreux, I, p. 53), notes this "L'argument théologique de convenance ἔπρεπεν θεῷ (Hebr.

manner then the author prefaces his following predication as something which "befitted" God.

This participial phrase πολλοὺς υἱοὺς εἰς δόξαν ἀγαγόντα requires some comment. Two questions are immediately raised. First is the question of the subject of this clause. Bengel¹ asserts that the following accusative τὸν ἀρχηγόν is the antecedent, noting its nearness and its identical masculine accusative singular form. But this seems unlikely since if Christ is the subject, υἱοὺς seems to be incongruous; rather ἀδελφούς would be expected (cf. 2:12) to preserve better the analogy. Thus, God must be the subject: God is the one bringing many sons to glory. The antecedent itself may be the unexpressed subject of τελειῶσαι (αὐτόν), or the dative αὐτῷ,² but in either case, God.

Secondly, the relation between ἀγαγόντα and the main verb

2:10; cf. 7:26), inconnu de la Bible, est employé par les écrivains profanes et particulièrement par Philo." Spicq alludes to four references in Philo: De leg. alleg. I, 48; De aet. mundi, 41; De opif. mundi, 148; De conf. ling., 175. Spicq's reference to De opif. mundi, 148, is specious; it does not refer to God, but to man as ruler in creation and how it was fitting that he should give names. Special note should be taken of R. Williamson's stunning rebuttal of the often assumed dependence of the author of Hebrews on Philo Judæus of Alexandria, Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews (Leiden, 1970). After careful examination of the references in Philo and in Hebrews to the concept, ἔπρεπεν θεῷ, Williamson strongly asserts that "the most the Writer of Hebrews can have taken over from Philo's use of the verb ἔπρεπεν in relation to God is the phrase, the bare bones of a formula. There is here no borrowing of ideas" (p. 92). J. Moffatt, Hebrews, p. 29, pointedly comments that "Philo has the phrase, not the idea." Williamson, pp. 92f., concludes: "The affirmation of 2.10 of the divine fitness of the suffering and Passion of Christ is just about as far removed from Philo's conception of the nature of God as it is possible to get."

¹J. A. Bengel, Gnomon, pp. 359f.

²While one might doubt the likelihood of linking the accusative participle with the dative pronoun (αὐτῷ), it appears to be a common enough construction in the NT. Bleek, Hebräer, IIA, p. 294, lists numerous examples.

τελειῶσαι must be addressed. The participle in Greek (present, aorist, or perfect) primarily concerns "Aktionsart," relation in time left to be determined by the main verb and the context. Burton describes this "Aktionsart" of the aorist participle as follows: "It conceives of the action denoted by it, not as in progress (present), nor as an existing result (perfect), but as a simple fact."¹ The author is, as it were, speaking of the fact of the "bringing."

This fact of God's "bringing many sons to glory" may not, however, be understood in isolation, but must be seen in the light of the primary verb τελειῶσαι . Only in light of this relationship to τελειῶσαι can anything be said of the temporal relationship of ἀγαγόντα to τελειῶσαι . The variety of interpretations at this point suggests a certain amount of ambiguity. Again we quote Burton who, in referring to Hb. 2:10, understands the aorist participle to be used adverbially to "refer to the action evidently in a general way coincident with the action of the verb, yet not identical with it."³ Thus, if this is correct, the author means that the act of "bringing many sons to glory" is regarded as a fact already, coinciding with Christ's "being made perfect through sufferings." Understood in this

¹E. W. Burton, Syntax of the Moods and Tenses in New Testament Greek, 3rd ed. (Edinburgh, 1955 (1898)), p. 60. A. B. Bruce, Hebrews, pp. 95ff., on the other hand, feels it proper to speak of a "gradual process" here--"no mere momentary act, but a process."

²H. Windisch, Hebraerbrief, p. 21, writes: "Das aoristische Partizip ἀγαγόντα fällt auf, es muss doch Zweck und Folgendes τελειῶσαι darstellen; man muss das Zeitverhältnis unbestimmt lassen: ἀγαγόντα bezeichnet das eigentliche Vorhaben Gottes, dem das τελειῶσαι dient." Westcott, Hebrews, p. 49, comments: "Though the objects of ἀγαγόντα and τελειῶσαι are different the two acts which they describe are regarded as synchronous, or rather as absolute without reference to succession of time." Both Michel, Hebräer (1975), p. 148, and Moffatt, Hebrews, pp. 30f., assert that ἀγαγόντα is devoid of any reference to past time.

³E. W. Burton, Moods and Tenses, p. 68.

way, the concept of succession here is out of place; the two events should be conceived of together, inseparably united, though still distinguishable.¹

A brief digression is fitting at this point. The author has already acknowledged the reality of the human situation. He knew that in this present world mankind does "not-yet-see" the fullest degree of glory (2:8b). The "glory" into which many sons are brought must be in its fullest realization yet future. Thus, an eschatological tension is visible here in what may perhaps best be called a "proleptic" aorist participle. In Jesus' being "made perfect" as the pioneer of salvation, the many sons already experience their "bringing into glory," which at the same time remains an essentially future reality.² Jesus' "perfection" as pioneer of their salvation thus functions as a sure source of hope for their still yet future, though absolutely certain, entrance into glory.³

In the relationship of ἀγαγόντα to τελειῶσαι the author highlights the intimate and vital connexion between Jesus and the many sons. As B. F. Westcott asserts: "The perfecting of Christ included the triumph of those who are sons in him."⁴ There is an agreement in

¹C. Spicq, Hébreux, II, p. 38, comments: "En réalité, le participe aoriste ne se réfère pas au passé, il laisse la succession des temps indéterminée, et peut exprimer une action synchrone à celle du verbe principal, τελειῶσαι, sa conséquence intrinsèque (comparer Rom. 4:20; Col. 2:13; 1 Tim. 1:12)."

²A. S. Peake, Hebrews, pp. 104f., suggests that "it is more natural to translate 'while he brought' in which case the bringing of the sons to glory is thought of as simultaneous with the perfecting of the leader. It is so in idea, since it is included in it, though not in realization."

³This line of thought seems compatible with Paul's use of the "first-fruits" concept (cf. 1 Cor. 15:20).

⁴B. F. Westcott, Hebrews, p. 49.

thought here with v.9. In v.9, as shown above, Christ's death actually became efficacious "for all men" in close connexion with his "crowning with glory and honour" by God. Likewise here in v.10 the "bringing to glory" of the many sons is also seen in close connexion with the perfection of the Son who is the leader of their salvation.

The object of εἰς δόξαν ἀγαγόντα is clearly πολλοὺς υἱοὺς . Indeed, the author's initial mention of the plural υἱοὺς must not be overlooked. The use of this title, which has special significance in this epistle in referring to Jesus as the "Son" (1:2, 5, 7), to speak of men in relation to God,¹ suggests further the close relationship of the Son and the sons which will be the theme of the following verses.

The use of δόξα² for the goal of the many sons harks back to vv.7 and 9, the "glory" intended for mankind by God (2:7) and the

¹A. B. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 92, writes: "The title 'sons' was possibly suggested by the creation story, but it arises immediately out of the nature of salvation as indicated in the quotation from the 8th Psalm, --lordship in the world to be. This high destiny places man alongside of the Son whom God 'appointed heir of all things.' 'If sons, then heirs,' reasoned Paul; 'if heirs, then sons,' argues inversely the author of our Epistle. Both reason legitimately, for sonship and heirship imply each other."

²Cf. Hb. 1:3. Δόξα in secular Greek signified simply "opinion" or "repute," however the translators of the LXX by rendering דְּבָרָא as δόξα invested δόξα with a particularly divine reference. Indeed, δόξα was almost exclusively connected to Yahweh. It referred to the "luminous manifestation of his person" or his shining revelation of himself. This δόξα is especially seen in creation and in the acts of salvation history; thus G. Kittel says: "God's power is an expression of the 'divine nature,' and the honour ascribed to God by man is finally no other than an affirmation of this nature. The δόξα θεοῦ is the 'divine glory' which reveals the nature of God in creation and in His acts which fill both heaven and earth. Again, the 'form of the divine manifestation or revelation' of δόξα, as this controls certain parts of the OT, is for the translator the disclosure or self-revelation of this nature." G. Kittel, "δοκέω," in TDNT, II, ed. G. Kittel, trans. G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, 1964), p. 244. As noted above, the NT also stresses the concept of believers (and nature) having a share in this divine manner of existence, but always through Jesus.

"glory" with which God crowned Jesus (2:9). Once again the intimate connexion between the "Son" and the "sons" is suggested since "glory" exists as their common objective. And once again an eschatological tension manifests itself at this point, for the "sons'" entrance into "glory" coincides with God's "perfecting" of Jesus, a realised event. But the "many sons" experience "glory" now only as promise or hope--their "crowning" is not yet an actuality. Only in the Son Jesus has mankind attained "glory"--the pioneer of salvation.

The author utilizes the rare christological title ἀρχηγός¹ for Jesus in v.10. Though this singular title has occasioned considerable comment concerning its precise meaning, "Archegos" is perhaps best understood in this passage to mean "one who begins something as the first in a series and thus supplies the impetus" for those who follow.² The contextual connexions here in 2:10, with an active

¹In the NT, ἀρχηγός only occurs in Hebrews (2:10; 12:2) and the Acts of the Apostles (3:15; 5:31).

²Like C. K. Barrett, "The Eschatology of the Epistle to the Hebrews," in The Background of the New Testament and its Eschatology, ed. W. D. Davies and D. Daube (Cambridge, 1956), p. 390, n. 1, we feel that ἀρχηγός in Hb. 2:10 fits better in Bauer's second meaning category than where Bauer locates it in his third ("originator," "founder") (W. Bauer, Greek-English Lexicon, p. 112). F. Bleek, Hebräerbrief, II 1, pp. 300-302, discusses the many LXX and classical Greek references with ἀρχηγός. See especially the recent study of P. G. Muller, XPICTOΣ APXHΓTOΣ : Der religionsgeschichtliche und theologische Hintergrund einer neutestamentlichen Christusprädikation, Europäische Hochschulschriften/ser. 23 Theol. 28 (Bern-Frankfurt, 1973), esp. pp. 64-67, 279-312. See also G. Delling, "ἀρχηγός," TDNT, I, ed. G. Kittel, trans. G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, 1964), esp. pp. 487f.; E. K. Simpson, "The Vocabulary of the Epistle to the Hebrews," EQ 18 (1946), pp. 35f.; G. M. M. Pelser, "The Concept Archēgos in the Letter to the Hebrews," HTS 28 (1972), pp. 86-89; V. Taylor, The Names of Jesus (London, 1953), pp. 91f.; and G. Johnston, "Christ as Archegos," NTS 27 (1981), pp. 381-5. Johnston notes that "the biblical meaning almost always denotes leadership and the ἀρχεῖν of rule" (p. 383) and argues strongly for the translation "Prince." Note especially the work of E. Käsemann, The Wandering People of God, trans. R. A. Harrisville and I. L. Sandberg (Minneapolis, 1984), pp. 128-133. Appealing to the so-called gnostic Urmensch myth as the relevant background for ἀρχηγός in Hb. 2:10 (and 12:2) Käsemann concludes that "we must not construe ἀρχηγός after the terminology of the Hellenistic hero cults

"bringing many sons to glory" and an emphasis upon the relationship between the Son and the sons, argue strongly for such a dynamic and relational conception of "Archegos" here. Such translations as "source"¹ and "author" (RV, NASB) are thus unsatisfactory for their one-sided and rather abstract sense does not reflect the dynamic and relational sense of the word in the context of 2:10. "Leader" (JB, NEB, GNB), "pioneer" (NIV, RSV) or even "trail-blazer" seem to preserve better the dynamic and the relational sense of ἀρχηγός in 2:10.

"Archegos" reflects directly on the relationship between the Son and the sons in this passage. As a title for Jesus, "Archegos" clearly suggests the unity (participation) of the Son Jesus with the many sons. The pioneer and those who follow share a common goal and a common path and are thus inseparably entwined. Indeed, to speak of Jesus as "Archegos" necessarily implies his place as a part of a people, a community.

But as well the title "Archegos" for Jesus demands distinction from those who follow after. The root sense of the word suggests a sense of "first-ness," a uniqueness. There can be only one "Archegos" who having first attained glory himself then is used by God in bringing many other sons to glory also as the "Archegos" of their salvation.² Jesus follows no one, but himself creates the way to glory/salvation for the many sons--an absolutely unique work. This unique character

as 'author,' but simply as 'leader,' corresponding to the term πρόδρομος in 6:20" (p. 133).

¹Cf. Hb. 5:9, αἴτιος.

²It is worthy of note that elsewhere in early Christianity ἀρχηγός appears in close connexion with σωτήρ : here at 2:10 ἀρχηγός τῆς σωτηρίας ; 2 Clement 20:5 τὸν σωτήρα καὶ ἀρχηγὸν τῆς ἀφθαρσίας ; and Acts 5:31 ἀρχηγὸν καὶ σωτήρα . One could also note the reference in Hb. 5:9 to Jesus as αἴτιος σωτηρίας αἰωνίου where being "made perfect" and "suffering" are also in view. Cf. also πρόδρομος in 6:20.

of the "Archegos" parallels the ἐφ' ἅπαξ motif which is so strong in Hebrews.¹ In this way the title "Archegos" sets Jesus clearly over against all men, for his was the one life and the one death that was "for all" (v.9). Thus this title facilitates a conception of Jesus as both one with the many sons, sharing their way and their goal, and yet as decisively distinct from them.²

The principal verb of v.10, τελειῶσαι, describes God's action on Christ the ἀρχηγός, and διὰ παθημάτων reveals the means of that action.

The τέλειος word group is particularly characteristic of the author of Hebrews,³ and the extraordinary use of this word group in Hebrews has called forth a sizable literature of linguistic and interpretive studies.⁴ Though this τέλειος word group deserves extensive

¹Cf. 7:27; 9:12; and 10:10; also ἅπαξ (see esp. 9:26ff. and 10:2). H. Anderson, Jesus and Christian Origins, pp. 284f., 287, rightly draws attention to this distinctive feature of Hebrews in reference to Jesus and his work. See also O. Cullmann, Christology of the NT, pp. 98-100.

²The homely illustration of E. Schweizer, Lordship and Discipleship (London, 1960), p. 11, is worth recalling at this point. He tells of a small boy in the Swiss valleys who can walk home through the snow only because his father walks ahead, making the footsteps in which he can walk--the child must still walk, he is not walked for, which would be for his father, alone, to go home 'in his stead;' but he does not imitate his father, which would be to break his own trail beside the father.

³In Hebrews we find τέλειος (5:14; 9:11), τελειότης (6:1), τελειοῦν (2:10; 5:9; 7:19, 28; 9:9; 10:1, 14; 11:40; 12:23), τελειωτής (12:2), and τελείωσις (7:11). Interestingly the author does not utilize τελεῖν, while in Revelation τελεῖν, but not τελειοῦν, is used. The author of Hebrews is particularly fond of τελειοῦν; of its 23 occurrences in the NT, 9 occur in Hebrews.

⁴The following have special relevance to Hebrews. C. Carlston, "The Vocabulary of Perfection in Philo and Hebrews," in Unity and Diversity in New Testament Theology, ed. R. Guelich (Grand Rapids, 1978), pp. 133-59; G. Dellling, "τέλος," TDNT, VIII, ed. G. Friedrich, trans. G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, 1972), pp. 49-87 (esp. pp. 80-87); L. K. K. Dey, The Intermediary World and Patterns of Perfection in Philo and Hebrews, SBL Diss 25 (Missoula, 1975); R. N. Flew, The Idea of Perfection in Christian Theology: An Historical Study of the

treatment in the epistle as a whole, this present study will limit itself (for now) only to the possible sense and significance of the verb here in 2:10. The use of τελειοῦν with the object being Jesus, not men, is itself unusual (only three times in Hebrews--2:10; 5:9; 7:28) and calls for special attention.

Though the general sense of τελειοῦν is "to bring to an end," "to complete," or "to bring to its goal,"¹ its precise sense is relative, its precise sense determined by the particular context.²

As A. B. Bruce aptly notes, "the special senses vary with the nature of the end."³ Hence the argument revolves around which precise sense functions most appropriately in a particular passage. There appear to be four primary senses which are most commonly mentioned in reference to 2:10. (a) Cultic: The cultic sense of "consecrate" has received

Christian Ideal for the Present Life (Oxford, 1934), esp. pp. 73-81; P. J. duPlessis, ΤΕΛΕΙΟΣ : The Idea of Perfection in the New Testament (Kampen, 1959), esp. pp. 206ff.; A. Hoekema, "The Perfection of Christ in Hebrews," CThJ 9 (1974), pp. 31-38; J. Kogel, Der Begriff τελειοῦν im Hebräerbrief im Zusammenhang mit dem neutestamentlichen Sprachgebrauch (Leipzig, 1905); O. Michel, "Die Lehre von der christlichen Vollkommenheit nach der Anschauung des Hebräerbriefes," ThStKr NF1 (1934-5), pp. 333-55; E. Riegenbach, "Der Begriff τελείωσις im Hebräerbrief," NKZ 34 (1923), pp. 184-95; R. Schippers, "Goal," in DNTT, II, ed. C. Brown (Exeter, 1976), pp. 59-65; M. Silva, "Perfection and Eschatology in Hebrews," WThJ 39 (1, 1976), pp. 60-71; C. Spicq, "La perfection chrétienne d'après l'Épître aux Hébreux," Memorial J. Chaine (Paris, 1950), pp. 337-52; A. Wikgren, "Patterns of Perfection in the Epistle to the Hebrews," NTS 6 (1959), pp. 159-67. Also note these special sections in certain commentaries: C. Spicq, Hébreux, II, pp. 214-225; B. F. Westcott, Hebrews, pp. 65ff.; H. Windisch, Hebräerbrief, pp. 44-46; O. Michel, Hebräer (1975), pp. 149f. Note especially E. Käsemann, The Wandering People of God, pp. 133-144.

¹W. Bauer, Greek-English Lexicon, pp. 817f.

²O. Michel struggles with this issue in his article "Vollkommenheit," pp. 334f.

³A. B. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 100.

strong support from such as G. Delling who asserts that Hebrews draws on the special cultic use of τελειοῦν in the LXX ("to be untouched," "to make free from stain"--thus finally meaning the one concerned is "able to practise the cultus").¹ Thus the sense in 2:10 would be that God has "qualified" Jesus to "come before Him as a priest" (7:19; 10:1). It concerns, as H. Windisch says, the Heilsmittlerqualität,² the cultic perfection of Christ as mediator. (b) Doxological: G. Lünemann suggests that τελειῶσαι is identical with the notion of δόξῃ καὶ τιμῇ ἐστεφανωμένον in v.9.³ Thus this sense emphasizes the "goal," the purposed and destined δόξα with which the Son is already crowned (v.9) and into which God through him leads many sons (v.10 ἀγαγόντα). (c) Ethical-Moral: The idea of Jesus being "made perfect" in the sense of an ethical-moral perfection (sinlessness) looms as perhaps the most controversial sense of all. It suggests a process which takes place in the human moral-ethical sphere. This "perfecting" is no abstract theory, but the product of a real human struggle in a concrete moral sphere in which Jesus suffered and died (διὰ παθημάτων). Few argue exclusively for the ethical-moral sense here, though many feel certain that this element must not be left out.⁴ J. Moffatt

¹G. Delling, "τέλος," in TDNT, VIII, pp. 821. The "mystery" religions are also noted as well as the LXX for the sense "consecrate." Delling notes the form in the LXX τελειοῦν τὰς χεῖρας τινος (Ex. 29:9, 29, 33, 35; Lev. 8:33; 16:32; in Lev. 21:10 it is τελειοῦν alone). That someone's hands were made free of stain means in the end that that person can then properly practise the cultus. Delling also notes 4 Macc. 7:15 (Eleazar's martyrdom) with τελειοῦν in the sense of "completing" or "concluding"--Eleazar's martyrdom "completed" a life of fidelity to the Law. See also F. Bleek, Hebräerbrief, II1, pp. 299ff.

²H. Windisch, Hebräerbrief, p. 45.

³G. Lünemann, Hebrews, p. 124.

⁴For example, O. Cullmann accepts a cultic-sacral sense of perfection, but feels strongly that "the purely cultic concept τελειοῦν applied to him necessarily (must) include also the sense of making morally perfect." Cullmann goes on to assert: "I cannot share

writes that the author of Hebrews "is thinking of God's purpose to realize a complete experience of forgiveness and fellowship (συντροφία) through the Son, and this includes and involves . . . a process of moral development for the Son."¹ (d) Vocational: Proponents of this perspective emphasize Jesus' completeness as the "pioneer of salvation." A. B. Davidson asserts that a "vocational" emphasis dominates all the passages in Hebrews which speak of Jesus' perfection: "In all these passages the reference is to the Son's present place in the world of salvation."² In 2:10 that specific place is as ἀρχηγός of the sons' salvation. The process is one that went on in Jesus in his relations to the many sons--making a complete and adequate leader who goes before his brethren. "The perfection is perfection in leadership," embracing both process and goal; "the process involved all that varied human experience which qualified him to be a captain of his fellows."³

As can be readily observed from even such a cursory survey as this, all four interpretive perspectives seek to link their understanding of τελειῶσαι to the context of the passage itself. The various senses quickly flow into one another and all of them are to one degree or another appropriate interpretations. Indeed, the best solution probably lies in an integrative blending of certain of these

the timorousness of many theologians who do not venture to speak of the 'moral perfection' of Jesus because they fear that this would automatically mean falling back into the liberal view of the life of Jesus." O. Cullmann, Christology, p. 93. On this see also the comments of H. Windisch, Hebräerbrief, p. 45; A. Wikgren, "Patterns of Perfection," p. 160; and R. N. Flew, The Idea of Perfection, p. 86.

¹J. Moffatt, Hebrews, p. 32.

²A. B. Davidson, Hebrews, p. 207.

³A. S. Peake, Hebrews, p. 105.

possible senses.¹

As the immediate object of τελειῶσαι is τὸν ἀρχηγόν, it seems most suitable to make one's interpretation of τελειῶσαι here primarily reflect this. The title ἀρχηγός designates a certain role Jesus plays as "pioneer of salvation"--a vocation that is only intelligible in relation to the many sons and their goal of δόξα. Ἀρχηγός thus has primarily to do with the work of Jesus as "pioneer of salvation." Hence, Jesus is "brought to his goal," "completed" or "made perfect" as ἀρχηγός --perfectly qualified for his assigned work of leading many sons to δόξα / σωτηρία. Thus the "vocational" perspective perhaps best represents the author's intention in 2:10.

But immediately one must stress that the author specifies the means of Jesus' perfection, διὰ παθημάτων.² This phrase supplies a "life-content" to Jesus' perfection in leadership--suffering. These παθήματα demand a firmly human context for Jesus' being "made perfect" by God. This reference to "sufferings" here removes Jesus' experience of being-made-perfect from an abstract christological framework and grounds it solidly in the real earthly experience of Jesus the man.

But does this then imply that the "perfecting" occurred in the ethical-moral sphere? Is the author thinking of Jesus' sinlessness (4:15) and obedience (5:9) to God? The author here only specifies the means of this "perfecting"--suffering--but does not define it in any

¹H. Windisch, Hebräerbrief, p. 22, senses the fluidity of meaning for τελειῶσαι: "τελειῶσαι kann hier einfach 'zum Ziele führen' heissen (= εἰς δόξαν ἀγαγεῖν), doch ist ein religiös-ethisches, ja auch ein kultisches Moment nicht ausgeschlossen." See also H. L. MacNeill, The Christology of the Epistle to the Hebrews (Chicago, 1914), p. 27.

²Perfection and suffering are connected in the author's thought (cf. 5:9). L. K. K. Dey, Perfection, pp. 222-5, sees in this that Hebrews is overcoming a tradition of dualism which would tend to isolate the two, so that "perfecting" (however understood) takes place definitely in the realm of flesh and blood (2:14). See below on 2:14.

more detail. Perhaps the most we can say is that to the degree that παθημάτων implies temptation, struggle within the human sphere, and obedience to God, then to that degree is an "ethical-moral" sense legitimate. In light of the connexion of suffering, learning of obedience, and perfection in Hb. 5:9, in reference to Jesus, then an ethical-moral sense appears indeed probable in 2:10. Along with A. Wikgren, one should then cautiously speak of "an underlying assumption of an ethical-moral content and development."¹

We also note, as O. Michel is keen to stress, that by linking τελειῶσαι to ἀρχηγός and παθημάτων in this verse, the author unites inseparably the perfection of Jesus in his vocation as ἀρχηγός with the perfection of his own life (διὰ παθημάτων). Michel writes:

Gott heiligt ihn durch Leiden (2:10) und bestätigt sein Kreuz durch die Erhöhung (5:9). Sundlösigkeit und Gehorsam sind der Ausdruck der inneren Vollendung, sind die Zeichen der bewahrten Sohnschaft; Kreuz und Erhöhung sind die Ereignisse, in denen die äussere, berufliche Vollendung erreicht wird. Die innere, persönliche Vollendung von der äusseren, beruflichen zu scheiden ist unmöglich; Hebr. hat beide Linien zu einer Einheit verwoben. Christi Vollendung ist eine Vollendung der Person und eine Vollendung des Werkes.²

The prepositional phrase διὰ παθημάτων describes the means whereby God perfected Jesus. It cannot be overemphasized that παθημάτων takes us into the earthly realm of flesh and blood, into the particular earthly way of the man Jesus as the crucible in which Jesus is "made perfect" for his work as the pioneer of man's salvation. H. Zimmermann well states that "die Geziemende, das Gott Konveniente, wird nicht abstrakt philosophisch deduziert, sondern an Jesus und der Geschichte seines irdischen Lebens abgelesen."³ For the author of

¹A. Wikgren, "Patterns of Perfection," p. 160.

²O. Michel, "Vollkommenheit," p. 349.

³H. Zimmermann, Das Bekenntnis der Hoffnung, p. 161.

Hebrews, salvation begins with the earthly life and experience of Jesus. It was "first spoken" through him (2:3); it was only on the ground of his "suffering of death" that he was exalted, thus rendering his death effective for all men (2:9); it was by means of his sufferings that God perfected him to be the "Archegos" of the sons' salvation. Throughout all these references, Jesus' earthly life and experience functions as the key element in the divine salvation programme for mankind.

What specifically these παθήματα are, we cannot say--though presumably the original readers knew what the author meant.

W. Michaelis asserts that all the references in Hebrews to Jesus' "suffering" refer simply to his death.¹ This may be true of 2:9, but it is virtually impossible to maintain of παθημάτων in 2:10, not to mention other references in Hebrews to Jesus' "suffering" (5:7-9).

Παθημάτων here at 2:10 may refer in a general way to the sufferings Jesus endured throughout his life, culminating in that final suffering of death. Then again, if, as many scholars postulate, the church at an early stage had framed for itself a rudimentary passion narrative, which in turn became the ground of the Gospel's passion narratives, it might be feasible to suggest that for Hebrews παθήματα means "passion story." However, the author in 2:10 supplies no elucidatory historical details (5:7ff.; 13:12) or allusions to guide one more specifically at this point. What is clear though is that Jesus' "sufferings" indicate more than the bare fact that Jesus was a man who shared in our human existence, they are descriptions of a person who experienced human

¹W. Michaelis, "πᾶσχω," TDNT, V, ed. G. Friedrich, trans. G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, 1967), pp. 904-39. In the NT πάθημα always appears in the plural form, with one exception at Hb. 2:9. Michaelis writes that "in Hb παθεῖν means 'to die,'" and goes on to say that "the plural παθημάτων in 2:10 refers to the total process of the crucifixion" (p. 934).

existence in a particular way--a way characterized by "sufferings." And certainly that particular way of "suffering" would relate meaningfully to the readers of Hebrews who were themselves acquainted with suffering (Hb. 10:32ff.). Indeed, in this passage the ἀρχηγός, who has been crowned with glory and honour, is intimately linked (in Hebrews' thought) to the many sons he leads to glory. And as the path to glory for the ἀρχηγός was a way of "suffering," so too then the many sons could expect to encounter a similar way of "suffering" as they follow his lead to glory.

We also note that as in v.9 the preposition διὰ¹ plays a key role in the reference to Jesus' "sufferings." It indicates that these "sufferings" were the means, the active instruments, in God's perfecting of Jesus as ἀρχηγός. Furthermore, "sufferings" were the means "appropriate" (ἔπρεπεν) for God to employ in "perfecting" Jesus to lead many sons to glory.²

V. Jesus and His Brethren

If 2:10 asserts the divine suitability of "suffering" as the means of perfecting Jesus as the pioneer of the sons' salvation,

¹See esp. C. F. D. Moule, Idiom-Book, pp. 56ff. This preposition plays an important part in both v.9 and v.10. Used with an accusative in v.9, it denoted Jesus' "suffering of death" as the basis or ground for his exaltation. Used with a genitive in v.10, it indicates the means God uses to perfect the ἀρχηγός.

²L. K. K. Dey, Patterns of Perfection, esp. pp. 222-25, suggests that the Greek tradition of suffering as a παιδεία which betters a man lies behind the passages which refer to Jesus' perfection via sufferings (2:10; 5:7-10; 7:28 and 12:1-11). He notes that the tragic poets saw innocent suffering as educating man and bettering him and then supposes that the ideals of this Greek παιδεία tradition were assimilated into Hellenistic-Jewish martyrology (cf. Wis. Sol. 11:9-10; 12:22; 2 Macc. 6:12, 16, 27, 28, 31; 4 Macc. 10:10-11). In extension of this παιδεία tradition, Dey argues, Hebrews interprets Jesus' suffering, temptations, and death as the παιδεία which led to his perfection. This present study will examine the so-called "paideia" tradition of Hellenistic-Judaism more extensively in the treatment of Hb. 5:7-9 below.

vv.11-13 explain and illustrate this assertion.

The Son Jesus and the many sons are designated in 2:11 by two participles, ἁγιάζων and ἁγιαζόμενοι . O. Procksch notes the dominant cultic use of ἁγιάζειν in the LXX and says that the general sense of the word ἅγιος suggests "that which belongs to God," the verb ἁγιάζειν meaning "to make to belong to God."¹ The basic sense is one of relation to God, though the negative concept of separation or cleansing from defilement may also pertain.²

In 2:11 Jesus is the one who "sanctifies" men. This is significant, for, as O. Procksch points out, only one who is ἅγιος can exercise ἁγιάζειν .³ "Jesus is assigned the divine prerogative of ἁγιάζειν , of making God's People His very own by bringing them into vital relationship with Himself."⁴

While the idea of "sanctification" is not delineated further here, Moffatt notes that "by 9:13f. we see that to be "sanctified" is to be brought into the presence of God through the self-sacrifice of Christ"⁵ (9:13f.; 10:10, 14). In commenting on the special use of ἁγιάζειν in Hebrews, O. Procksch likewise underlines this close

¹O. Procksch, " ἅγιος," TDNT, I, pp. 88-115 (esp. pp. 111f.). ἁγιάζειν is the LXX translation for ὤψω (cf. Ex. 29:21; 30:29, qal; Ex. 29:43; Lev. 10:3; etc., niphal; Ex. 28:34; Lev. 22:2f., etc, causative; Gn. 2:3; Ex. 13:2, etc., comparative).

²G. W. Buchanan, Hebrews, p. 32, defines ἁγιάζειν as "to cleanse, make holy, or separate from defiled things." M. Dods, Expositor's Greek Testament, IV, p. 266, stresses the larger sense of the word when he says that ἁγιάζειν "signifies that which enables men to approach God." Since the predominant concern of this passage is relationships (Son to sons, Son/sons to Father), then the more general sense of "bringing into relation to God" seems more appropriate.

³O. Procksch, " ἅγιος," p. 103.

⁴J. Moffatt, Hebrews, p. 32.

⁵Ibid.

relationship of "sanctification" and Christ's "atoning sacrifice,"¹ between "being brought into vital relationship with God" and Christ's "suffering and death for all men." This correlates well with the context of 2:11, for in the immediately preceding verses the author crucially relates the suffering and death of Christ to the "bringing to glory" or "salvation" of the sons.

But the author addresses his primary concern in v.11 vis-a-vis the ἁγιάζων and the ἁγιαζόμενοι using an elliptical phrase that has been the source of diverse interpretations-- ἐξ ἐνὸς πάντες. The point of contention is the way one interprets ἐνός . Is it neuter or masculine, and more important then, to what or whom does it refer? There are numerous possible interpretations,² but the consensus of the majority of interpreters--arguably a correct one--is that it refers to God.³ The sanctifier and those he sanctifies are all of God (ἐνός). There are two main points of support. The term ἅγιος ,

¹O. Procksch, " ἅγιος," p. 112. B. F. Westcott, Hebrews, p. 50, also notes that "the language used . . . naturally fixes attention on Christ and Christians in relation to the work of redemption and sanctification wrought out on earth."

²If taken as masculine, three options are proposed: God, Adam, or Abraham. As we support "God" in the text, we shall briefly mention something of the other two possibilities. Adam: J. Héring, Hebrews, p. 19, incorrectly mentioning Bengel in support here, writes that "the Son, by his incarnation, became a descendant of Adam like all men." O. Procksch, " ἅγιος ," p. 112, also asserts ἐνός means Adam, drawing support from the emphasis of v.14 on physical unity. J. A. Bengel, Gnomon, IV, p. 362, citing as support 2:16, 17; 13:12 and the OT quotes in 2:12f. (in reference to "Israel"), advocates Abraham as the right understanding of ἐνός . See also G. W. Buchanan, Hebrews, p. 32. The interpretation of ἐνός as a neuter is by J. Calvin and, recently, P. E. Hughes, Hebrews, p. 105, sees ἐνός as speaking of "nature" or "constitution." Calvin, Hebrews, p. 26, writes that "we are all made of one and the same stuff."

³Several of those who take ἐνός as referring to "God" in 2:11 are: Chrysostom, Bleek, Delitzsch, Westcott, Peake, Alford, Vaughan, Dods, Lünemann, Moffatt, Windisch, Spicq, F. F. Bruce, Montefiore, Michel, et al.

derivatives of which are used in v.11 to depict the Son Jesus and the many sons, implies "relation to God." Then again ἁγιαζόμενοι corresponds to the πολλοὺς υἱοὺς of v.10 where God; in the analogy, must be "father." Thus the oneness of the ἁγιάζων and the ἁγιαζόμενοι consists in their like relationship as "sons" to God. But the author does not stress so much the relationship to God as the brotherly relationship between those who share in common that sonship relationship to God.¹

One must note again the tension in the picture of the relationship between Jesus and the many sons. On one hand, they are "all of one" (God), clearly a statement of their unity. But simultaneously Jesus is clearly distinct from the many sons, for it is Jesus who sanctifies them. Again the author's picture of the relationship of the Son and the sons is characterized by the dialectic of unity and distinctness.

In the second portion of v.11, the author now affirms that because of Jesus' and the sons' common relationship to God, Jesus is "not ashamed" (οὐκ ἐπαισχύνεται)² to call them "brothers" (ἀδελφούς).³ Thus the brotherhood of Jesus and the sons is derived not from their

¹A. B. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 123, suspects the reason that the author of Hebrews leaves us in such ambiguity with ἐξ ἑνός is that his purpose is not to stress origin from anyone, but to stress the result, the unity in brotherhood of the Son and the sons.

²H. G. Link, in his article "Shame, Respect," NIDNTT, III, ed. C. Brown (Exeter, 1978), p. 563, notes that Hebrews uses ἐπαισχύνομαι with reference to God's saving activity (cf. 2:11; 11:16; and 12:2) where Christ takes the αἰσχύνη of death on the cross upon himself. See also R. Bultmann, "αἰσχύνω," TDNT, I, ed. G. Kittel, trans. G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, 1964), pp. 189-91; he notes that the usual context of "shame" is one of judgment.

³Ἀδελφούς corresponds to ἁγιαζόμενοι and the earlier πολλοὺς υἱοὺς. In the gospels Jesus calls some men his "brothers" (Mtt. 12:50; 25:40; 28:10; Mk. 3:35; Lk. 8:21; Jn. 20:17; etc.) and is called the "first-born of many brethren" by Paul (Ro. 8:29).

common flesh and blood existence, but primarily from their common relationship to God as "sons"--a relationship which for the "many sons" depends upon the salvation work of the Son Jesus. Here again the dialectical relationship between the Son and the sons is apparent. For while the oneness between them is the obvious point of calling them "brothers," οὐκ ἐπαισχύνεται implies Jesus' sonship is somehow superior to theirs.¹ Nevertheless, "brotherhood" remains the heart of the matter for the author here, and in the following verses he illustrates this "brotherhood" through words from the OT put upon the lips of Jesus.

Much has been written concerning the range, interpretation, and use of the OT in Hebrews.² However, a deeper investigation of

¹J. C. Campbell, "In a Son," Int 10 (1956), p. 33, comments that "the word 'ashamed' here implies that to create this fellowship Christ had to cross the gulf that separates the Holy One from the unholy. Jesus entered into relation with sinful men (Lk. 5:18)."

²Hebrews' use and interpretation of OT texts has justifiably received much attention. Two things stand out in particular concerning the author's use of the OT. (1) As C. Spicq, Hébreux, I, p. 341, notes: "Toutefois, cette herméneutique suppose en outre que toute l'Ecriture est messianique." (2) Also characteristic and especially peculiar to Hebrews is what B. F. Westcott calls the "personal" character of citation in Hebrews. This is to say that the author sees the OT as a living word of God, his present personal voice, not so much as a sacred written Book of human authorship; thus, apart from one place (2:6ff.), God is always presented as the speaker. Remarkably this holds true even where the prophet is speaking in his own person (e.g., Hb. 2:13). Here at 2:12-13 and later at 10:5ff. the author attributes the OT words to Christ. On Hebrews and the OT see these works: S. Kistemaker, The Psalm Citations in the Epistle to the Hebrews (Amsterdam, 1961); B. Lindars, New Testament Apologetic: The Doctrinal Significance of the Old Testament (London, 1961); C. Spicq, Hébreux, II, p. 330-50; F. C. Synge, Hebrews and the Scriptures (London, 1959), esp. pp. 16-18; S. G. Sowers, The Hermeneutics of Philo and Hebrews: A Comparison of the Interpretation of the Old Testament in Philo Judaeus and the Epistle to the Hebrews (Richmond, 1965); R. V. G. Tasker, The Old Testament in the New Testament (London, 1946), esp. pp. 97-110; B. F. Westcott, Hebrews, pp. 67-70 and 469-495; R. Williamson, Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews (Leiden, 1970), esp. pp. 496-580; G. Hughes, Hebrews and Hermeneutics, pp. 47-66; M. Barth, "The Old Testament in Hebrews," in Current Issues in New Testament Interpretation, ed. W. Klassen and G. F. Snyder (New York, 1962), pp. 53-78; K. J. Thomas, "The Old Testament Citations in Hebrews,"

these matters would press far beyond the scope of our immediate concern. For the author of Hebrews, Jesus now speaks (λέγων)¹ the OT words of the psalmist (2:12/Ps. 21:23LXX) and of the prophet Isaiah (2:13/Isa. 8:17, 18).

Probably from its earliest days the primitive church interpreted Ps. 22 (21 LXX) christologically.² In light of Jesus' "cry of dereliction" from the cross (Ps. 22:1), the psalm became, as B. Lindars puts it, "a veritable quarry" of the early church for details of the Passion of Christ.³ As Lindars points out, apart from Christ's cry of dereliction

the rest of the psalm as a whole provides the answer to the scandal of the opening words. It is a poem of the righteous sufferer, and leads up to a promise of vindication. In this way it is suitable for the general apologetic position, that the sufferings of Jesus fit into a predetermined plan. So when it is said that Christ suffered 'according to the scriptures,' it is possible that Psalm 22 is one of those scriptures, besides the fundamentally important Isa. 53.⁴

NTS 11 (1964-65), pp. 303-25; A. T. Hanson, "Christ in the Old Testament According to Hebrews," in Studia Evangelica II (1964), pp. 393-407; G. Howard, "Hebrews and the Old Testament Quotations," NovT 10 (1968), pp. 208-16; W. Manson, Hebrews, pp. 184-87; and C. Buchel, "Der Hebräerbrief und das Alte Testament," TSK 79 (1906), pp. 508-91.

¹The introductory formula of Hebrews to the OT citation, characteristically of Hebrews, does not indicate the location or human author of the OT citation. R. Williamson, Philo and Hebrews, p. 517, asserts that this "almost studied disregard" of location witnesses to the author's belief in scripture as "living revelation."

²C. H. Dodd, According to the Scriptures: The Sub-Structure of New Testament Theology (London, 1952), p. 97, writes of Ps. 22: "The psalm as a whole was clearly regarded as a source of testimonies to the passion of Christ, and His ultimate triumph, and probably from an early date, since it is woven into the texture of the Passion-narrative, and used in writings almost certainly independent of one another."

³B. Lindars, New Testament Apologetic, p. 90f., (e.g., v.1/Mtt. 27:46; Mk. 15:34f.; v.7/Mtt. 27:39; Mk. 15:29; v.8/Mtt. 27:43; v.18/Mtt. 27:35; Mk. 15:24; Lk. 23:34; Jn. 19:24)

⁴Ibid.

As noted above, the first part of the psalm relates the extraordinary suffering of the righteous sufferer, while the second part records his joyous hope in ultimate vindication and victory. It is noteworthy then that a similar pattern occurs in Hb. 2 as well (vv.9ff.) which points to the suffering of Jesus which issues not only in his own vindication and exaltation, but in the vindication and exaltation of his brethren as well.¹ However, though Ps. 22 carries an aura of Jesus' passion and exaltation, and though Hb. 2:9ff. refers explicitly and significantly to Jesus' suffering and exaltation,² there appears to be a noticeable shift in application of this psalm by the author in Hb. 2:12. Indeed, the choice of v.22 (v.23LXX) of the psalm seems exceptional in itself as it is never quoted elsewhere in the NT (Barnabas 6:16). No longer does the passion of Christ operate as the primary point of application for the author in quoting Ps. 22; rather here he focuses upon the "brotherhood" of Christ with his people. Those to

¹C. Westermann, The Old Testament and Jesus Christ, trans. O. Kaste (Minneapolis, 1968), p. 63f., classifies Ps. 22 as a "complaint of the mediator" psalm, a special category of the larger group of "laments of the individual." He cites the examples of Moses (Ex. 5:22), Joshua (7:7-9), Elijah (1 K. 19), Jeremiah (11-20) and the "servant-of-God" passages in Isaiah (49:1-6 and 50:4-9). "Suffering" belongs in a special way to this office, as the "complaints" show. Westermann writes: "There is a profound connection between the complaint of the mediator . . . and the life and suffering of the same people (of God) The mediator is, in fact, one of those people, one of the nameless sufferers." He goes on with specific reference to Ps. 22: "The mediator's complaint is essentially the lament of man in his suffering and trouble, in his human existence. This is a lament which Christ took upon himself."

²S. Kistemaker, The Psalm Citations, pp. 83f., surmizes that the theme of suffering in Hb. 2:9-10 led the author of Hebrews to think of Jesus' death on the cross when Christ fulfilled the prophecies of Ps. 22. Though the concept of "brotherhood" dominates the foreground of the author's concern in quoting Ps. 22:22, the fact that that brotherhood is based on a common sonship which in turn is based on Jesus' suffering as the Son could lend support to Kistemaker's conclusion.

whom Christ proclaims (ἀπαγγελῶ).¹ God's name are called ἀδελφοὶ μου . And Christ, as one of them-- ἐν μέσῳ ἐκκλησίας--, praises God. It is noteworthy that that brotherhood manifests itself in Jesus' sharing in the "worship of God" with the brethren,² a remarkable comment in itself concerning Jesus' oneness with men. Calvin calls Christ "the chief Conductor of our hymns."³

The second and third OT quotations (v.13) come from Isa. 8:17, 18, though the insertion of καὶ πάλιν in Hebrews between these consecutive words from Isaiah has caused some uncertainty as to the precise location of ἔσομαι πεποιθὺς ἐπ' αὐτῷ . (v.13a/Isa. 8:17). Identical repetitions of these words occur elsewhere in the OT (Isa. 12:2; 2 Sam. 22:3LXX), however it does seem unlikely that the author of Hebrews would have been unaware that these were consecutive words in Isaiah.⁴ The author likely uses καὶ πάλιν as a literary device to designate clearly two distinct points.

In Isa. 8 the OT prophet foretells the disaster approaching Israel as a result of their turning away from God. Indeed, the Lord

¹The use of ἀπαγγελῶ instead of the LXX διηγῆσομαι (הַגִּידִי) is the lone difference from Ps. 21:23LXX.

²"For the passages cited not merely affirm the brotherhood, but also exhibit its reality in the participation by the Messiah of human conditions." M. Dods, Expositor's Greek Testament, IV, p. 266. H. Montefiore, Hebrews, p. 63, speculates that Ps. 22:22 "was used in the early Church as a testimonium of the presence of the risen Lord at its worship." There is no other evidence to support this as being the case; it remains sheer speculation.

³J. Calvin, Hebrews, p. 27.

⁴F. C. Synge, Hebrews and the Scriptures, pp. 17f., suggests that καὶ πάλιν was an insertion by a scribe who imagined that there were two quotations here, the first being found in 2 Sm. 22:3. There is no evidence to support this assertion of Synge's. Notably, in Hb. 10:30 the author again divided consecutive OT words by καὶ πάλιν (Deut. 32:35).

Himself shall become "a stone of stumbling" unto them (Isa. 8:14).¹ In this context of approaching national destruction the prophet Isaiah affirms that he will continue to put his confidence in the Lord (8:17); and that he, along with his children Shear-jashub and Maher-shalal-hash-baz, shall stand as witnesses or signs to the people of Israel. Drawing upon this section of the OT (Isa. 6:1-9:6) frequently used by the early church to speak of Christ, the author of Hebrews changes the subject of these statements to Jesus himself. Thus what Isaiah said of himself and his own family, Jesus now says of himself and his family. In 2:11 the author asserted Jesus' close relationship to those who are also "sons" of God, unashamedly calling them "brethren." In quoting from Isaiah he sees this intimate relationship of Jesus to the "sons" mirrored in the words of the prophet Isaiah, and he exploits them for his own purpose.

In v.13a the insertion of ἐγώ into the OT text points to the significance of Jesus himself putting his trust in God even when, as in the time of Isaiah, those who should be trusting God are all turning away from their former confidence in Him. An attitude of trust in God should be characteristic of God's people. In this attitude, Jesus himself (ἐγώ) shares. Jesus and the many sons are brethren as they share in common an attitude of confidence in God. Thus the author boldly speaks of Jesus' trusting God, emphasizing in a striking manner Jesus' solidarity with frail and needy men who also must trust in God.

In v.13b Jesus and the "children" of God² given to him stand

¹The image of the "stone of stumbling" appears again in the NT application to Christ (cf. 1 Pt. 2:8 and Ro. 9:33).

²We must beware of pushing the analogy too far, for if Jesus takes Isaiah's place, then he is the "father." Yet in the context of Hebrews here it is obvious that God must be considered to be the "father."

together, like Isaiah and his children, as "signs" pointing to God's way. As sons, a family, they obediently witness together to the way of their common father, God.¹ The key word of the passage certainly must be παῖδία,² stressing the family analogy with God as the father, and Jesus and the "children" as sons and brothers.

In Hb. 2:12-13 the words of the psalmist and Isaiah become the words of Jesus and describe his oneness with his brethren.³ It is noteworthy that all three OT quotations have a religious framework. In the first quotation (Ps. 22) the relational context was one of proclamation and worshipful praise. In the second (Isa. 8:17) Jesus affirms his trust in God. In the third (Isa. 8:18) Jesus and the children stand obediently as witnesses to God's righteous way. Thus the primary point of vv. 11-13 is the spiritual unity which exists between Jesus and his brethren in their relation to God. Yet the fact that the author so boldly speaks of Jesus' own trust or faith in God (note emphatic ἐγώ) firmly aligns Jesus with frail humanity. "Faith implies human frailty: it signifies dependence, and Jesus shows his kinship with his brethren by declaring his faith in God."⁴

¹It is possible that ἰδοὺ ἐγώ suggests not only the oneness of Jesus with the παῖδία, but infers as well a "willingness to obey."

²Cf. P. E. Hughes, Hebrews, p. 109 n. 100 on παῖδία.

³Interestingly the author of Hebrews uses the OT to illustrate Jesus' brotherhood with men and not the appropriate words and actions of Jesus himself as seen in the gospel traditions. Cf. Matt. 12:46ff.; Mk. 3:31ff; Lk. 8:19ff.; Matt. 25:40; 28:10; Jn. 20:17--Jesus calling his followers "brothers." Noting this H. Windisch, Hebräerbrief, p. 22, writes: "Dabei verweist der Verfasser nicht etwa auf Mc. 3:34f., par. Mt. 25:40; 28:10; Jn. 20:17 oder ein anderes Wort des 'geschichtlichen Jesus,' sondern auf viel ältere und heiligere Herrnworte, die er der LXX entnimmt." Cf. G. Hughes, Hebrews and Hermeneutics, pp. 61f.

⁴H. Montefiore, Hebrews, p. 64.

Indeed, this attitude of faith typified the "men of old" (Hb. 11) and here Jesus is portrayed in union with such men as these--trusting in God.¹

VI. "Flesh and Blood"

With v.14 the author takes as his subject τὰ παῖδία of whom he has just spoken in the OT quotation (v.13) and observes that "the children share in flesh and blood" (κεκοινῶνηκεν αἵματος καὶ σαρκός). αἷμα καὶ σὰρξ ² should be taken here in the fundamental physiological sense as indicating man's corporeality.³ Indeed, this phrase sharply emphasizes the material aspect of man's earthly mortal and physical nature in contrast with the immortal spiritual nature of the divine. Though both terms αἷμα and σὰρξ also often have decided theological significance in Hebrews and the rest of the NT, it is inappropriate to suppose any peculiar theological significance for αἷμα καὶ σὰρξ in Hb. 2:14.⁴ Rather here the author simply utilizes a common Hebraic

¹Jesus' identification with the heroes of faith listed in Hb. 11 is examined in greater detail below in the treatment of Hb. 12:1-3.

²Note the inverted (to us) order of αἵματος καὶ σαρκός ; cf. Eph. 6:12. H. Montefiore, Hebrews, p. 64, argues that the author inverted the usual order of words here in order to emphasize the αἷμα which would be so significant for him later in the epistle. See also C. Spicq, Hébreux, II, p. 43; F. Delitzsch, Hebrews, I, p. 131; and O. Michel, Hebräer (1975), pp. 159f. There is however no indication that this was the intent of the author in inverting the "usual order." Indeed Eph. 6:12 also has this order, so perhaps the order of the words was not set so firmly in Greek.

³See these articles: J. Behm, "αἷμα," TDNT, I, ed. G. Kittel, trans. G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, 1964), pp. 172-77; E. Schweizer, "σὰρξ," TDNT, VII, ed. G. Friedrich, trans. G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, 1971), pp. 98-151 (esp. pp. 141f.). Note the use of σὰρξ in Hb. 5:7 (ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ) also referring to the earthly existence of Jesus (cf. 12:9; 9:10; 10:20).

⁴J. Hering, Hebrews, p. 20, correctly warns against seeing eucharistic overtones here. Cf. C. Spicq, Hébreux, II, pp. 43f.

idiom¹ to express the "children's" humanity and mortality.

The author then draws the inference that since the children "share" in a corporeal nature, Jesus "shared likewise of the same" flesh and blood nature as men. No more concrete an affirmation of the genuineness of Jesus' manhood could possibly be made than this. The author prohibits any shade of docetism in so plainly stating Jesus' "sharing" the same mortal physical nature as mankind.²

The author then proceeds to supply the reason why Jesus shared the "blood and flesh" of the children.³ The ἵνα -clause suggests that Jesus shared the children's humanity so that he could as a man suffer death and by means of his death (διὰ τοῦ θανάτου) effect the destruction of the Devil who holds the power of death,⁴ thus

¹ Αἷμα καὶ σὰρξ here in Hb. 2:14 is the NT Greek equivalent of the Hebrew אָדָם בְּשָׂרָא, an established Jewish idiom, and appears to designate man in his creatureliness and distinction from God (cf. Mtt. 16:17; 1 Cor. 15:50; Gal. 1:16; Eph. 6:12). Cf. O. Michel, Hebräer, pp. 159f.

²Only in tense can a distinction between κεκοιμήνηκεν and μετέσχευ be drawn. The aorist μετέσχευ points to a particular event in history when Jesus shared in flesh and blood--a condition which continues no longer. On the other hand the children's sharing flesh and blood (κεκοιμήνηκεν/perfect tense) continues on as their constant situation. Thus the author of Hebrews states in an almost startlingly blunt fashion that Jesus shared in the same way as men an earthly physical existence of flesh and blood.

³Two printed sermons on this passage (2:10-18) address what their authors view as the primary concern of this text: cur Deus homo. See D. G. Miller, "Why God Became Man," Int 23 (1969), pp. 408-24; and G. Klein, "Hebräer 2:10-18," GPM/MPTH 18 (1964), pp. 137-43.

⁴Usually the language of κράτος is only used of God or Christ in a doxology, but here the Διάβολος has the κράτος of death. See W. Michaelis, "κράτος," TDNT, III, ed. G. Kittel, trans. G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, 1965), pp. 905-15. Of 2:14 Michaelis writes: "Death is subject to him. He uses it as an instrument. Death is in the devil's service and is his myrmidon, cf. Wisd. 2:24. In other places too, one finds the view that death is a demonic force which may be listed with the ἀρχαί, ἐξουσίαι, and δυνάμεις, cf. 1 Cor. 15:24, 26, where death is the last and most deadly of these enemies of Christ (or men) who form the train of the devil" (p. 907). See also H. Windisch's excursus "Tod und Teufel" in his commentary, Hebräerbrief, p. 23.

liberating those enslaved by the fear of death throughout all of life (v.14b-15). Though brethren of Jesus, their flesh and blood nature places them in the realm of the Devil, and death which he controls. The author further describes their Lebensgefühl as one of slavery (δουλεία) to the fear of death. Jesus, who shares their earthly form of existence and himself entered into the realm of the Devil and death, paradoxically effects "the death of death by death."¹ The result of this destruction of death and the Devil is that the children enslaved by a fear of death² are set free from that slavery. How Jesus' death destroys the Devil and death and liberates those enslaved the author does not elaborate on here.

Special attention must be given to the phrase διὰ τοῦ θανάτου. Though it is true that the author does not say explicitly "his" death (τοῦ θανάτου), the context of chapter 2 makes it indisputable that it is the death of Jesus. That it refers to Jesus' earthly death as a man also seems clear in light of the immediately preceding reference to his sharing "flesh and blood" with men. Jesus' earthly death as a man functions as the focal point of the argument in these verses (14-15). It is both the immediate reason for his humanity and the means whereby men are liberated from the fear of death.

In vv.14-15 then the author of Hebrews affirms in the strongest way the reality of Jesus' oneness with men, underlining the very substance of mortal human form as that which Jesus shared in common with the children. Further, the historical flesh-and-blood death of

¹J. Valiamangalam, in his dissertation Victim the Victor: The Paradox of Hebr. 2:14-15 (Diss. Pont. Univ. Gregoriana Romae, 1965), discusses this matter at length.

²Ἀμαρτία goes unmentioned by the author in vv.14,15. It is the children's φόβος θανάτου which is eradicated by Jesus' death (cf. 9:15).

Jesus was the decisive event which liberated men from their slavery to the fear of death. Apart from his death, death's reign of terror would rage on unabated.

Once again the dialectical relationship between Jesus and the many sons is evident. Jesus shares "flesh and blood" with the children, yet it is the death of Jesus alone that has a redemptive effect on them. Jesus is one with them, yet at the same time remains distinct from them. E. Grässer, calling this relationship "Einheit in der Verschiedenheit," believes it to be the hermeneutical key to understanding verses 14-18.¹

Verse 16 appears to function as a transition from vv.14-15 to v.17f.,² drawing attention again to the obvious (οὐ γὰρ δήπου) fact³ that the intimate relationship here is not between Christ and the angels, but Christ and the children (σπέρματος Ἀβραάμ), the many sons. But what v.16 itself means and how it functions as a transition from v.14f. to v.17f. is a matter of dispute among interpreters.

The verb ἐπιλαμβάνεται has been the much discussed source of interpretational contention. G. Delling observes, the literal sense of ἐπιλαμβάνεσθαι is "to grasp or seize for oneself," "to lay firm hold of," or "to take hold of . . . by the hand" (literally or

¹E. Grässer, "Die Heilsbedeutung des Todes Jesu in Hebr. 2: 14-18," Theologia Crucis-Signum Crucis, Festschrift für E. Dinkler zum 70 Geburtstag, ed. C. Andresen and G. Klein (Tübingen, 1979), pp. 165-184.

²To describe v.16 as a "terse parenthesis," as J. Moffatt does, Hebrews, p. 36, dismisses the verse too lightly and does not adequately appreciate this statement's significance as a transitional statement helping to hold the argument together.

³Δήπου, only here in the NT, is a classical expression for "certainly," "surely," or "of course," implying the agreement of the reader. See H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, I (Oxford, 1940), p. 388.

figuratively).¹ In the NT this "taking hold of by the hand" can have either a hostile intent or an intent of concern and aid;² context to a large extent determines its precise sense. The traditional interpretation has been to take ἐπιλαμβάνεται in reference to the incarnation of Christ: "to take hold of the nature" of the seed of Abraham.³ This understanding is reflected in the AV and the Phillips translation particularly and is still defended by such as C. Spicq and P. E. Hughes in recent years.⁴ However the predominant modern view generally coincides with Delling in his understanding of ἐπιλαμβάνεται in 2:16: "to draw someone to oneself to help" (see the ASV, RSV, GNB, NASB, etc.).⁵ This "aid" or "help" sense of ἐπιλαμβάνεται appears most likely here in v.16 in light of the clear positive "help" sense of ἐπιλαβομένου in Hb. 8:9 (Jer. 31:32). As well, if 2:16 alludes to Isa. 41:9 (LXX), the sense of "help" also

¹G. Delling, "λαμβάνω," TDNT, IV, ed. G. Kittel, trans. G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, 1967), pp. 5-15 (esp. p. 9); also see B. Siede, "Take, Receive," DNTT, III, ed. C. Brown (Exeter, 1978), pp. 747-51.

²For the hostile sense, see e.g., Acts 16:19; 18:17; 21:30, 33; Lk. 23:26, and figuratively in Lk. 20:20, 26. For a more positive sense, see e.g., Mtt. 14:31; Lk. 9:47; 14:4; Mk. 8:23 and Hb. 8:9.

³Until the 1551 Latin Version of S. Chateillon (Castellio), where he rendered ἐπιλαμβάνεται as opitulatur instead of apprehendit (Vulgate), the sense of "help" had never been put forward. B. F. Westcott, Hebrews, p. 53, recalls the infamous condemnation of Beza for Chateillon's departure from the traditional translation: ". . . exsecranda . . . est Castellionis audacia qui ἐπιλαμβάνεται convertit opitulatur."

⁴C. Spicq, Hébreux, II, pp. 45f.; P. E. Hughes, Hebrews, pp. 115-18.

⁵G. Delling, "λαμβάνω," TDNT, p. 9. I list a number of those in agreement with this viewpoint: Alford, Moffatt, Westcott, F. F. Bruce, Windisch, Michel, Héring, Montefiore, A. B. Davidson, A. B. Bruce, Rendall, Delitzsch, Peake, Hewitt, Lünemann, Bengel, etc. G. W. Buchanan, Hebrews, p. 36, suggests that it may mean "to take by choosing" which gives an idea of preference.

seems likely in the author's mind.¹ Importantly also, the sense of "taking hold of in order to help" fits the context of the argument admirably, logically following on the thought of the Son's liberating of the children (v.15) and smoothly leading into the more explicit description and affirmation of Jesus' purposeful intent to "help" (βοηθῆναι, v.18) "those who are tempted" (τοῖς πειραζομένοις ; v.18). Jesus then "takes hold of 'Abraham's seed' in order to help them, not the angels."²

The expression "seed of Abraham" may refer either to the Hebrew people³ or to the "family of faith"⁴ of whom Abraham is the prototype.⁵ The author intends the latter, sharing the perspective of Paul that the faithful in Christ are the "seed of Abraham" (Gal. 3: 29, 7, 9; Ro. 4:16; 11:16).

Thus, v.16 must be seen as a further attempt to underline the purpose of the incarnation, to lend effective aid to his brethren and fellow sons of God. The underlying paraenetic intent of this entire

¹If the author of Hebrews has alluded to Isa. 41:9, he has substituted ἐπιλαμβάνεται for the LXX ἀντελαβόμεν ("helped").

²In light of 2:5 this reference to the angels here makes sense; angels are not destined for dominion in the world-to-come and the Son has not shared flesh and blood to help those who do not so share in it and its problems and destiny. E. Grässer, "Die Heilsbedeutung des Todes Jesu," p. 175, writes: "In Form einer literarischen Inklusion, die den Schlusspunkt des in 1:4 einsetzenden Vergleiches Christi mit den Engeln darstellt, betont V.16 also noch einmal nachdrücklich, wem die Rettungstat des göttlichen Gesandten gilt: solchen, die auf Erden 'wie in einem fremden Land wohnen' (ὡς ἀλλοτρίαν, 11:9), weil ihr Ursprung und ihr Ziel die himmlische Heimat ist."

³A. B. Davidson, J. Hering, Peake, Buchanan, Lünemann, Bleek, A. B. Bruce, H. Alford, et al. support this position.

⁴B. V. Westcott, T. Hewitt, Spicq, C. J. Vaughan, Delitzsch, Windisch, Michel, F. F. Bruce, Moffatt, et al. support this position.

⁵Cf. Hb. 3:2ff.; 11:8-12.

passage (2:5-18) now becomes clearer as the author moves toward the practical application of Jesus' real humanness and suffering of death to the troubled life situation of his readers.

VII. The Suffering and Tempted Ἀρχιερεὺς (2:17-18)

"Therefore" or "for this reason,"¹ the author begins v.17, Jesus "had to be made like his brethren in every respect." Ὁφείλεν is the language of necessity or obligation,² leading directly to an infinitive clause-- κατὰ πάντα τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς ὁμοιωθῆναι --which states the nature of Jesus' obligation.

It has been disputed whether κατὰ πάντα τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς ὁμοιωθῆναι means complete and absolute likeness or "resemblance" (likeness, but with difference). The adverbial phrase κατὰ πάντα appears to enlarge upon the "flesh and blood" comment of v.14a, extending Jesus' likeness to his brethren to every aspect of human existence. Thus the author emphatically declares the unqualified and unimpaired humanity of Jesus as that which was necessary (ὀφείλεν). Montefiore writes that Jesus "did not merely resemble man in some facets of human nature; His similarity was absolute."³ P. E. Hughes asserts that κατὰ πάντα removes any possible doubts about the precise sense of ὁμοιωθῆναι: "This likeness is nothing less than complete identification: assimilation, not simulation."⁴ However, Schneider cautions that ὁμοιωθῆναι in v.17 "does not indicate full

¹ ὅθεν is common in Hebrews (2:17; 3:1; 7:25; 8:3; 9:18; 11:19).

²See F. Hauck, "ὀφείλω," TDNT, V, pp. 559-66.

³H. Montefiore, Hebrews, pp. 67f.

⁴P. E. Hughes, Hebrews, p. 119. Others such as Michel, Bleek, Delitzsch, A. B. Bruce et al. support this position as well.

equality, only likeness."¹ Referring to the three verbs κοιωνεῖν , μετεχειν , and ὁμοιωθῆναι , E. Grässer also cautions that they denote no simple total identity. Rather, he says, they speak with a reserve, indicating a likeness with a subordinate idea of difference.² While it is true that there is a difference, especially notable in relation to sin (4:15),³ the author at this point seems primarily interested in emphasizing Jesus' complete (κατὰ πάντα) likeness to his brethren, both in nature (αἷμα καὶ σὰρξ) and in every aspect of human existence.

Why then was it necessary that Jesus experience a complete likeness to his brethren? The immediately following ἵνα -clause points to the purpose: "in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people" (v.17b, RSV). The author's unique designation for Jesus, ἀρχιερεὺς , occurs here for the first time in the epistle, though the characteristic motif of Jesus' high-priestly ministry is only dealt with in an introductory manner here.⁴ The significance of the high-priest in 2:17 is that by his cultic ministry the sins of the people--his brethren--are expiated. There are numerous avenues open for investigation at this point;⁵ however for now these may be left and stress laid on the primary concern of the author at this point in

¹J. Schneider, "ὁμοίος ," TDNT, V, p. 189.

²E. Grässer, "Die Heilsbedeutung des Todes Jesu," pp. 169ff.

³See below in Chapter 3 on Hb. 4:15 and the critical issue of Jesus' sinlessness.

⁴Cf. Hb. 5-10 in particular. See below in the present study, Chapters 3 (Hb. 4:14-16), 4 (Hb. 5:7-9), and 5 (Hb. 7:14).

⁵In particular the description of the ἀρχιερεὺς as ἐλεήμων and πιστός ; as well the highly disputed ἱλάσκεσθαι τὰς ἁμαρτίας τοῦ λαοῦ . This present study addresses the issue of Jesus the High-priest as "merciful" and "faithful" below in the examinations of Hb. 4:14-16 and especially Hb. 5:7-9.

his argument. That essential concern is this: Jesus' complete likeness to his human brethren as the indispensable foundation for Jesus to be a "high priest" and to function as faithful and merciful in that high-priestly ministry. To this likeness κατὰ πάντα, the author then boldly points.

The author concludes this larger passage (2:5-18) referring finally to Jesus' ability to "help those who are tempted" because he too "suffered when he was tempted" (2:18). In mentioning Jesus' temptation for the first time now,¹ the author of Hebrews has defined a more specific area within the comprehensive κατὰ πάντα likeness affirmed in 2:17.

The first clause of v.18 is particularly difficult, ambiguous in the precise way it should be understood. Yet the general direction of its meaning remains clear enough.

It appears best to render the ambiguous ἐν ᾧ as causal-- "because" (RSV), "since" (NEB), or "in that" (AV) (Ro. 2:1; 8:3; Hb. 6:17)²--though it is also capable of a locative sense such as "wherein" (ἐν τούτῳ ᾧ).³ Taken causally ἐν ᾧ points to the reason or ground of Jesus' ability to help, not to the sphere of that help.

The following πέποιθεν αὐτὸς πειρασθείς supplies that reason for Jesus' ability to help. Like ἐν ᾧ, this too is ambiguous and has been variously understood by commentators. Do these words mean

¹Cf. 4:15; also 5:7ff. A more extensive treatment of Jesus and his endurance of temptation follows in the next chapter (Hb. 4:15) of this present study.

²The grammars of A. T. Robertson (p. 721) and Blass and Debrunner (p. 118) all speak of the "causal" force of ἐν ᾧ in Hb. 2:18. J. Moffatt, H. Windisch, A. S. Peake, M. Dods et al. support the "causal" sense which, in the recent century at least, is the dominant view.

³For this understanding of ἐν ᾧ in 2:18 see the comments of A. B. Davidson, Hebrews, p. 72, or B. F. Westcott, Hebrews, p. 58.

that Jesus' temptations caused his suffering, or that his suffering was the source of his temptations? Generally speaking, the action of the aorist participle is antecedent to that of the finite verb. This would suggest a translation such as this for Hb. 2:18: "he himself suffered when he was tempted" (NIV).¹ But however this may be, the point of great significance here is the concrete fact that Jesus himself was tempted. That this is so is borne out by his immediately following reference to the help Jesus extends to "those who are tempted" (τοῖς πειραζομένοις). Jesus' help then is grounded in (ἐν ᾧ) the fact that Jesus himself was tempted, as the author later puts it, κατὰ πάντα καθ' ὁμοιότητα (4:15).

It is difficult to say much in terms of specific content about these "temptations," except that here in 2:18 they are connected to Jesus' "suffering." It seems unlikely that the perfect πέποιθεν² here in 2:18 refers "exclusively to the death of Jesus," as W. Michaelis asserts.³ But whether it refers to the suffering Jesus endured throughout his life culminating in the crucifixion, or to the "passion story" in a more limited sense, is impossible to know. In any case, the author closely connects Jesus' suffering with his temptation. Jesus' temptation involved suffering (5:7ff.).

¹F. Blass and A. Debrunner, A Greek Grammar, p. 175, caution that the notion of relative past time is not at all necessarily inherent in the aorist participle. Burton, Moods and Tenses, pp. 59f. also notes the fluidity of time-relation to the main verb in the aorist participle. Both Blass-Debrunner and Burton acknowledge, however, that the dominant use of the aorist participle is to denote antecedent action to the main verb.

²B. F. Westcott, Hebrews, pp. 58f., writes that the perfect tense "fixes attention upon the permanent effect and not on the historic fact." One assumes that "permanent effect" is the "help" Jesus can yet give to those who are still experiencing temptation.

³W. Michaelis, "πάσχω," TDNT, V, p. 917.

The pastorally concerned author of Hebrews then proclaims in this brief pastoral note the practical benefit of having Jesus as their great High Priest. Because Jesus suffered when he was tempted, δύναται τοῖς πειραζομένοις βοηθῆσαι (v.18b). Though this application becomes more explicit in Hb. 4:15, even here it is clear that the author's pastoral comment is prompted by the actual difficulties faced by his readers. They lived in a situation of continuing temptation, tempted to drift away from their Christian faith and neglect the great salvation of the Son Jesus (2:1-4).¹ The precise nature of their present difficulties is unspecified by the author, though he does refer to certain sufferings and difficulties they had formerly endured (Hb. 10:32-34). What was certain for the author though, was that on the basis of Jesus' own human susceptibility to temptation, he can now "help" those who are now tempted. Whatever may be said of the precise nature of that "help,"² the most significant point for us is that Jesus' ability to "help" is grounded firmly in his concrete earthly experience of being tempted. Furthermore, the author does not regard Jesus' susceptibility to temptation as an embarrassment, but as an absolutely crucial experience which actually enabled Jesus to "help" men.³ O. Michel writes: "So ist die Versuchung Jesu

¹Cf. especially Hb. 10:35ff. The temptation to apostasy and Hebrews' regular calls to "persevere" are an underlying theme throughout this epistle.

²Understanding v.18 in light of the previous verse, Westcott, Hebrews, p. 58, writes: "He (Jesus) removes the barrier of sin which checks the outflow of God's love to the sinner, and at once brings help to the tempted." Thus stated, Jesus' "help" is his expiation of the sins of the people. As well in light of 4:15f. and 7:25, Christ's "help" may refer to his intercession on behalf of men who draw near to God. Then again, Christ's example may be seen in itself as a source of encouragement or "help" for his brethren who also struggle in temptation.

³H. Seesemann, "πεῖρα," TDNT, VI, ed. G. Friedrich, trans. G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, 1968), p. 33, observes: "Among the NT

Voraussetzung für Seine Hilfe, und Seine Hilfe besteht in der Bedeutung Seines Leidens und Sterbens für uns." Again Michel states with reference to 2:18 and 4:15: "Das Leid und die Versuchung des Christus sind die Voraussetzung für Seine Hilfe."¹ Indeed, again and again throughout this passage (2:5-18) the author regards Jesus' earthly life and experience as being the foundational event upon which the effective aid of his brethren is based (cf. vv.9, 10, 14f, 17, 18).

The reference to Jesus' temptation quickly recalls the synoptic tradition's record of Jesus' wilderness temptation experience (Mtt. 4:1ff.; Lk. 4:2ff.). Perhaps more significantly the Gethsemane episode is described as a "temptation" of Jesus, an hour in which his disciples too would encounter temptation (Lk. 22:28, 39-46). With specific reference to 2:18, Michel writes: "Dass Gethsemane als die eigentliche 'Versuchung' des Christus angesehen wird, geht aus der Verbindung von παθός und πειρασμός hervor (2:18)."² Although Michel may be correct, it would seem difficult to justify this conclusion from the reference in 2:18 alone--it must be tied to 4:15 and 5:7ff. On its own the reference to Jesus' "temptation" in 2:18 seems too general to be limited to any particular portion of the gospel tradition. The following two chapters of this present study on Hb. 4:15 and Hb. 5:7-9 provide a more appropriate scenario for discussion of the possible traditions behind Hebrews' reference to Jesus' temptation. However this may be, in 2:18 the author is clear that Jesus' life was

epistles Hebrews emphasizes with particular urgency the fact that Jesus was tempted during his life on earth. If it does so chiefly in passages designed to strengthen the readers in their temptations and conflicts, there is still no doubt that the life of Jesus is here understood as a life in temptation."

¹O. Michael, Hebräer (1949), p. 38.

²Ibid.

a life lived under temptation, enabling Jesus to function as a merciful and faithful High Priest and to help those presently undergoing temptation.

Then, too, Hb. 2:17-18 evidences the presence of that same dialectical relationship between Jesus and his brethren as noted elsewhere in 2:5-18. Jesus stands as one with his brethren in that he too was tempted, yet he remains clearly distinct from them in that he is the one who helps, while his brethren are those who receive help from him.

VIII. Summary Statements

(a) The realism with which the author of Hebrews regarded Jesus' humanity is emphatically underlined throughout 2:5-18. Certainly in the mind of the author there was no question that Jesus shared the same mortal human nature as men. He asserts this in the strongest manner in v.14-- αἵματος καὶ σαρκός (2:9, βραχύ τι παρ' ἀγγέλους ἡλαττωμένον).

Furthermore, he states clearly that Jesus was "in every respect like his brethren" (v.17). The plain implication of this statement is that Jesus himself shared in and experienced the same human existence as his brethren. The author asserts Jesus' unashamed affirmation of kinship with the many sons, joining them in worship (2:12) and a faith attitude of dependence on God (2:13). But significant though these aspects of kinship may be, in 2:5-18 the author focuses specially upon Jesus' experience of temptation (2:18, suffering (2:9, 10, 18) and death (2:9, 14). As noted above (v.9), Jesus' "suffering" is seen in close connexion with his death, though it remains doubtful that the references to his "suffering" should be understood as referring exclusively to his death. In vv.10 and 18 there is

no need to think only of that final act of suffering, death. The reference may well be to the suffering which accompanied Jesus throughout life reaching its climax in that final moment of suffering, death itself. Thus, the author stresses not only Jesus' death, but also his life of suffering, a suffering which characterized his existence as a man. The reference to Jesus' temptation is equally significant (v.18), anchoring Jesus firmly within the realm of human susceptibility and "weakness" (4:15). In this passage, therefore, the author portrays Jesus as a flesh and blood man, susceptible to temptation, experienced in suffering, and tasting death.

These references leave no doubt that the author of Hebrews regarded the particular man Jesus as authentically participating in the human crucible of existence. For the author of Hebrews, Jesus' life was no docetic mirage or theologized image, but possessed the dimension of a fully human life immersed in the characteristic human perspectives of mortality, dependence on God, temptation, and suffering. Indeed, it is the particular way which Jesus lived as a man that he views as most significant in relating the Son to the sons. Therefore, in Hebrews it may not be said that only the Dass of Jesus' human existence and death is important. Rather, the author presents Jesus as a definite man who lived and died in a particular way, a way akin to that of his human brethren κατὰ πάντα, but a way specially marked by his experience of temptation and suffering.

Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that at this point in his "word of encouragement" the author has not seen fit to embellish his references to Jesus' authentic human experiences with clarifying historical details. Specific episodes from Jesus' life may in fact not be on the author's mind. For his purposes an emphasis on the full-blooded realism of Jesus' human life, as evidenced by clear

(though generalized) references to special aspects of his participation in human existence, suffices to support his paraenetic argument in 2:5-18. This awareness of and concern with Jesus' earthly life clearly exceeds, however, an interest in the bare factuality of Jesus' human existence. The author and readers are vitally concerned with "how" Jesus lived and died.

To the question why the author of Hebrews provides no hard historical details to "flesh out" his reference to "how" Jesus lived and died, it may be suggested that the author knew nothing of the story of Jesus' life and death. This seems patently unlikely since in this same epistle there are allusions to certain historical details of the life of Jesus (5:7; 7:14). It seems more likely that the author did not include historical details of Jesus' life in Hb. 2 because their inclusion would have been superfluous to his immediate paraenetic purposes. The Hellenistic-Jewish-Christian readers of this letter--the same may be said of Hebrews' author-- would almost certainly have discovered more about Jesus' life and death than its bare factuality in order to have converted from Judaism to Christianity. For such readers, who the author suggests should by now have been teachers of the faith (Hb. 6), generalized references such as those in Hb. 2 would have been enough to substantiate the author's argument. Though this certainly enters into the realm of speculation, the latter option seems inherently more likely.

(b) . Notably throughout 2:9-18 the references to Jesus' earthly life always serve the author's paraenetic concern to relate Jesus and his life to the many sons' human predicament. In v.9 Jesus' exaltation renders Jesus' death efficacious "for all," but that exaltation itself is grounded in Jesus' "suffering of death" (διὰ τὸ πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου). In v.10 the many sons are brought to glory by

the "Archegos" Jesus who is perfected for this task "by means of his sufferings" (διὰ παθημάτων). Again in v.14f. the author presents Jesus' death as the means (διὰ τοῦ θανάτου) whereby the children who are enslaved by the fear of death are liberated. In v.17 Jesus' likeness to his brethren is the presupposition for the exercise of his high-priestly ministry of expiating the sins of the people. Lastly, in v.18 it is on the basis of Jesus' suffering when tempted that he is "able to help" those who continue to face temptation. In all these cases Jesus' earthly life is the critical element at the author's point of application. Jesus' concrete experience as a man is the hinge on which the author's "word of encouragement" turns.

(c) Finally, throughout Hb. 2:5-18 the author presented a certain tension in the relationship between the Son Jesus and the many sons. At one level the author firmly maintains the complete solidarity of Jesus with his human brethren, yet in virtually the same breath he affirms Jesus' distinction from them. United, yet unique. Similar, yet dissimilar. This dialectical tension is most apparent in the two christological titles present in this passage: "Archegos" and High Priest. As "Archegos," Jesus shares the humiliated way of those whom he leads to glory. As one of them, their leader Jesus endures suffering and death.¹ He leads their hymns of praise to God and stands with them in a trusting attitude of dependence on God. Yet also as "Archegos," Jesus precedes his brethren; he alone creates and establishes the way to glory. It is the "Archegos" Jesus who "sanctifies" the many sons and liberates them from the fear of death and the

¹The author of Hebrews sets out Jesus for his readers as an example to be emulated much more clearly in Hb. 12:2f. where he refers once again to Jesus as "Archegos." This present study will examine this "model" motif vis-a-vis Jesus as "Archegos" more extensively below in Chapter 6 (Hb. 12:1-3).

Devil by his unique death. As High Priest, Jesus is one with his brethren in "every respect." He himself "suffered when he was tempted" (v.18). Yet it is only the High Priest Jesus who can make atonement for the sins of the people, and it is Jesus who "helps" his struggling brethren--not vice-versa. Significantly, for Hebrews the reference to Jesus' earthly life is the crux of both Jesus' unity with the many sons and his uniqueness.

Chapter 3

THE TEMPTED, YET SINLESS, HIGH PRIEST JESUS (Hb. 4:15) .

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THE TEMPTED, YET SINLESS, HIGH PRIEST JESUS (Hb. 4:15)

I. Introduction

Clearly for the author of Hebrews, the passage 4:14-16 occupies a critical place in his epistle. Having alluded to Jesus as ἀρχιερεὺς in only anticipatory fashion up to this point,¹ the author now focuses his thoughts wholly upon Jesus' high priesthood, a theme which will occupy his attention almost exclusively throughout the next six chapters (5-10).

But Hb. 4:14-16 is no mere introductory section, for already in these brief statements the author provides his readers with the basic lineaments of Jesus' high priesthood--a summary statement of that which he will explicate thoroughly in his following argument.²

The reference in 4:15 to Jesus' temptation and sinlessness is a well known crux interpretum. The following study will focus primarily on those aspects of this passage which will aid in understanding the nature and significance of Jesus' earthly life for the author of Hebrews.

¹Cf. 2:17, ἐλεήμων . . . καὶ πιστὸς ἀρχιερεὺς τὰ πρὸς τὸν θεόν ; also 3:1, ἀρχιερεὶα τῆς ὁμολογίας ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν . In neither place does Hebrews elaborate on the high priesthood of Jesus.

²The section 4:14-16 has been characterized in various ways, usually as introductory or transitional. The connexion with what precedes, suggested by οὖν (v.14), is uncertain, though the connexion with what follows is quite clear. Yet this is no simple introduction to his theme. In this passage (4:14-16) the author provides a synopsis of his understanding of Jesus as high priest, an understanding which he explicates fully in his following argument (Hb. 5-10).

II. Heavenly High Priest (4:14)

In v.14 the author designates Jesus not simply as ἀρχιερεὺς, but as ἀρχιερεὺς μέγας.¹ Though an unusual expression, nevertheless ἀρχιερεὺς μέγας is encountered elsewhere (notably in 1 Macc. and Philo.)² It is, however, impossible to prove that the author of Hebrews borrowed it from either source. However this may be, the author utilizes this strange formulation to lay special emphasis upon the surpassing greatness of Jesus as high priest.³ Indeed, in light of the following argument (5:1-10), it seems likely that he here intimates a contrast of Jesus with the Aaronic high priests. Jesus is not merely an ἀρχιερεὺς, but an ἀρχιερεὺς μέγας.⁴

¹Cf. 2:17; 3:1; 4:15; 5:5, 10; 6:20; 7:26; 8:1; 9:11 which have ἀρχιερεὺς; 4:14 alone has ἀρχιερεὺς μέγας; 10:21 has ἱερεὺς μέγας.

²Cf. 1 Macc. 13:42, ἔτους πρώτου ἐπὶ Σίμωνος ἀρχιερεὺς μεγάλου καὶ στρατήγου καὶ ἡγουμένου Ἰουδαίων; De somn. I214, ὅν δὲ τρόπον, θεασώμεθα τὸν μέγαν ἀρχιερέα, . . . (of the Logos); De somn. I219, ὁ μὲν δὴ μέγας ἀρχιερεὺς τρισὶ ταῖς εἰρημέναις τυπωθεῖς σφραγίσαι; De somn. II183, τίς οὖν οἶνοχος θεοῦ; ὁ σπονδόφορος ὁ μέγας ὄντως ἀρχιερεὺς . . .; De Abr. 235 ὅν θεασάμενος ὁ μέγας ἱερεὺς τοῦ μεγίστου θεοῦ (of Abraham's encounter with Melchizedek). See R. Williamson on μέγας, Philo and Hebrews, pp. 130-32.

³The Hebrew title for high priest was שָׂרֵף כֹּהֵן, literally "great priest" (cf. Hb. 10:21 ἱερεὺς μέγας). Ἀρχιερεὺς μέγας may then be understood to suggest the greatest of the great priests. Michel, Hebräer (1949), p. 55, writes: "Pleonastisch spricht 4:14 von einem 'grossen' Hohenpriester (10:21 und 13:20), um Jesus aus der Schar der gewöhnlichen Hohenpriester hervorzuheben." Cf. Michel, Hebräer (1975), p. 204.

⁴See the article of C. P. Sherman, "A Great High Priest (Hebrews 4:14)", ET 34 (1923), pp. 235-236. Sherman suggests that in using the title ἀρχιερεὺς μέγας for Jesus the author of Hebrews was doing more than just emphasizing Jesus' greatness, that "great high priest" was more than just a pleonastic expression. "The Apostle used this combination deliberately and with a definite purpose, (1) because of the peculiar circumstances of the time, and (2) to accentuate the unchangeable and eternal High priesthood of our Lord" (p. 235). One should not read too much into the title ἀρχιερεὺς μέγας, though a contrast with the past and present high priesthood is probably implied.

The author then refers to Jesus the great high priest διελήλυθότα τοὺς οὐρανοὺς . As great high priest Jesus has passed through the heavens. The perfect participle suggests that "le passage est achevé et le résultat immuable."¹ But what meaning and significance did Jesus' heavenly journey have for Hebrews?

Probably διελήλυθότα τοὺς οὐρανοὺς should be understood in light of the analogy later drawn (chap. 9) with the OT high priest's entrance through the σκῆνη into the Holy-of-holies on the Day of Atonement.² Like the OT priest, the great high priest Jesus passes through a σκῆνη (9:11)--though now a heavenly σκῆνη (= τοὺς οὐρανοὺς 4:14)³--and beyond it into the true sanctuary or Holy-of-holies (τὰ

¹C. Spicq, Hébreux, II, p. 91.

²J. Chrysostom, Homilies, p. 91, looks back to the Jesus-Moses comparison of Hb. 3:1ff. and interprets διελήλυθότα τοὺς οὐρανοὺς from that perspective. He writes: "There are two points of superiority over Moses implied in the words, 'passed into the Heavens.' i. That Christ entered into the Rest which He promised His people, while Moses did not. ii. That that Rest is Heaven, not the earthly Canaan." The cultic analogy, however, seems far more to the point in 4:14-16. H. Zimmermann, Das Bekenntnis, p. 170, rightly rules out any apocalyptic understanding of this heavenly journey (cf. 2 Enoch 3-21; Asc. of Isa. 7ff). "Vielmehr will der Verfasser seine Darlegung in Kap 9 vorbereiten, wie er es in anderer Weise bereits in 2:17 getan hat." Of more interest is the question whether the author of Hebrews knew of some sort of ascension event such as we find in Luke (24:50ff.) and Acts (1:6-11). Whether or not he did know of such an event, it is clear here that he is more concerned with the cultic analogy in which Jesus, like the OT high priest, passes through a veil and into the Holy-of-holies.

³O. Michel, Hebräer (1949), p. 114 n. 1, notes the various senses of οὐρανός in Hebrews: "Streng genommen müsste man in unserem Brief einem dreifachen Sprachgebrauch von 'Himmel' unterscheiden: 1. die 'Himel,' die zu dieser Schöpfung gehören und deshalb vergänglich sind (1:10-12); die 'Himmel,' durch die Christus hindurchschreitet (4:14), das himmlische Zelt, das nicht mehr zu dieser Schöpfung gehört (9:10-12); 3. den Himmel, welcher der eigentliche Wohnort der Gottheit ist (9:24)." Cf. Michel, Hebräer (1975), p. 205 n. 2. Cf. Helmut Traub, "οὐρανός," TDNT V, pp. 527ff. The Rabbis are famous for their speculations on the number of 'heavens.' Paul too spoke of a man ἐν Χριστῷ. . . ἀπαγέντα τὸν τοιοῦτον ἕως τρίτου οὐρανοῦ (2 Cor. 12:2). Seven heavens, however, appears to be a common number arrived at by the Rabbis (e.g., Hagigah 12b where after Rabbi Judah said there were two heavens (ref. to Deut. 10:14), Resh Lakish names

ἅγια , 9:12).¹ As for the OT high priest the Holy-of-holies was the place where he goes in order "now to appear in God's presence on our behalf" (9:24, RSV). If this OT cultic analogy does provide the typological context for interpreting διεληλυθότα τοὺς οὐρανούς (4:14), then this image strongly suggests that Jesus as great high priest has performed and does perform his high priestly ministry for men in the presence of God Himself.

This heavenly journey of Jesus provides particular dimensions in the author's picture of Jesus as high priest. ~~To present Jesus as~~

and describes seven). Interestingly, the seventh heaven (according to Resh Lakish's description), named Zebul, was where "the heavenly Jerusalem, and the Temple and the Altar are built, and Michael, the great prince, stands and offers up thereon an offering." The Babylonian Talmud. Seder Mo'ed, ed. I. Epstein, trans. I. Abrahams (London, Soncino Press, 1938).

¹G. W. Buchanan, Hebrews, p. 80, notes that "the affirmation that Jesus had 'gone through the heavens' expressed belief in his ascension, but it was couched in terms of sacrifice in the temple." Buchanan's further interpretation, imaginative though it may be, seems to push the cultic analogy too far: "Since Jesus' crucifixion was interpreted by the author in terms of sacrifice on the altar, and since animal sacrifices were cooked or burned completely so that their odor could be sent up through the column of smoke to God in the heavens, it seemed reasonable to conclude that Jesus, too, ascended into heaven, or through various heavens, up to the very throne of God." In his article, "'Outside the Camp': Hebrews 13:9-14," HTR 55 (1962), pp. 299-315, Helmut Koester writes this concerning the heavens and Jesus' entrance into the heavenly sanctuary in Hebrews' cultic analogy: "σκηνή is the outer part of the tabernacle of the wilderness (= πρώτη σκηνή, 9:26), never the temple as a whole! It is clearly distinguished from the 'second,' 'the inner tent,' the ἅγια ἁγίων (9:3, 7), or simply called ἅγια . . . since the inner part of the tabernacle, the Holy of Holies, is the type of the heavenly sanctuary, the 'tent' becomes a symbol for the heavenly regions through which Christ was to pass to enter the heavenly sanctuary itself (9:11-12 . . .). The same differentiation between heavenly sanctuary and the heavenly regions is apparent in Hebrews 8:2: . . . This is not a hendiadys, but indicates that Christ's office includes both the service in the sanctuary of heaven itself (τὰ ἅγια) and the entering by passing through the heavenly regions (ἡ σκηνή) = the ascension! It also becomes clear here that the author of Hebrews is more interested in the opening of the way into the heavenly sanctuary than in the performance of a service within the sanctuary of heaven" (pp. 309f.).

~~high priest~~. To present Jesus as the ἀρχιερεὺς μέγας who has "passed through the heavens" clearly indicates his exalted position--ὕψηλότερος τῶν οὐρανῶν (7:26; cf. 1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:23). Jesus is a transcendent priest in the presence of God Himself. But Jesus' heavenly journey suggests more than just his exaltation. E. Schweizer writes:

Here the journey of Jesus through the heavens has become relevant in itself. No longer is it merely another expression of the exaltation; it has assumed an importance of its own. It has become the saving event proper. But how?¹

As Schweizer correctly discerned, the answer to that question is that Jesus' heavenly journey to God's presence points inevitably (9:11-28) to his high priestly work of intercession before the Father on man's behalf. Thus it is Jesus' ability to do something, to act, to help men, that must be properly inferred from the statement that as great high priest Jesus "has passed through the heavens."² The great high priest Jesus' interceding for men in God's presence brings men hope and stamina to hold fast their confession of faith.

Hope has thus been anchored beyond the veil (6:17-20). That is, the place of God's presence is now accessible to hope. This world is linked with the world to come. For the πρόσ-δραμος (6:20) has penetrated into that world for us.³

The author then identifies the great high priest who passed through the heavens as Ἰησοῦν τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ .⁴ The twofold significance of this appellation with regard to Jesus as high priest is commonly noted: Ἰησοῦν signifying his human nature, and υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ his special relationship to God. Such an interpretation of the names

¹Eduard Schweizer, Lordship and Discipleship, SBT 28, (London, 1960), p. 89.

²Ibid.

³G. Schrenk, "ἱερός," TDNT, III, p. 281.

⁴The combined form Ἰησοῦν τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ occurs only here in Hebrews. Τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ occurs in 6:6; 7:3 and 10:29.

should only be subscribed to with caution, though it may well be the author's intention in this situation. Westcott's comment on this is typical: "The two titles are placed side by side in order to suggest the two natures of the Lord which include the assurance of sympathy and power."¹

Having (ἔχοντες),² therefore, such a high priest as this, he exhorts: κρατῶμεν τῆς ὁμολογίας. The opinions on how one should understand ὁμολογία³ all essentially express one of two basic conceptions: ὁμολογία refers to (1) that which we confess,⁴ or, (2) the act of confession as a response of faith⁵--or perhaps a combination of the two.⁶ O. Michel, who prefers to understand ὁμολογία as an "ecclesiastical confession of faith," or "baptismal confession,"⁷ or

¹Westcott, Hebrews, p. 106. Cf. Lünemann, Hebrews, p. 187.

²The emphatic position of the participle ἔχοντες should not pass unnoticed. It directs the readers' attention to their present and continuing possession, Jesus as their heavenly high priest. C. Cpicaq, Hébreux, II, p. 91, comments: "Cette profession de foi confiante et animante à pour object Jésus, comme grand prêtre du peuple chrétien. ἔχοντες, très emphatique, insiste sur cette relation."

³ὁμολογία only occurs six times in the NT, three of these in Hebrews: Hb. 3:1; 4:14; 10:23; cf. 2 Cor. 9:13; 1 Tim. 6:12, 13.

⁴This appears to be the position of the majority of commentators. See ad loc. F. F. Bruce, J. Moffatt, G. Lünemann, H. Montefiore, B. F. Westcott, et al.; see also O. Michel, "ὁμολογέω," TDNT, V, pp. 199-220 (esp. pp. 215ff.); G. Bornkamm, "Das Bekenntnis im Hebräerbrief," in Studien zu Antike und Urchristentum (München, 1959), pp. 188-203, suggests that the ὁμολογία of Hebrews is a "Taufbekenntnis."

⁵2 Cor. 9:13 clearly expresses this sense. Cf. also Ro. 10:9ff. and 2 Cor. 4:13.

⁶See esp. J. Hering, Hebrews, p. 24. P. E. Hughes, Hebrews, p. 129, writes that this question of the precise sense of ὁμολογία is "academic rather than real; for him whom we confess creedally we also confess publicly. Thus, though the term 'confession' has a certain ambiguity, the two possible interpretations belong together."

⁷See G. Bornkamm, "Das Bekenntnis," pp. 188-203.

"liturgy of praise," fairly concludes:

In any case, *ὁμολογία* is in Hb, too, a binding word, an expression of obligation and commitment, the answer of the community to the promise of God. The new and distinctive thing in Hb is the reference to a fixed *ὁμολογία* which sums up the beliefs of the community as a living word and which has to be held fast.¹

If one asks what the content of that *ὁμολογία* was for Hebrews, it must at least be said that Jesus occupied a singularly important place in it, though ultimately the precise outline of the "confession" will remain unknown.² However, that it sets forth in some form the significance of Jesus Christ for the christian community seems certain.

The importance of the often repeated exhortation in Hebrews to "hold fast the confession"³ suggests the readers' present difficulty in doing just that. Clearly though, the author regarded this as a serious threat, and, like a pastor stressing a key point in a sermon, he repeatedly encourages them to hold firmly onto their *ὁμολογία*--

¹O. Michel, "*ὁμολογέω*," *TDNT*, V, pp. 215f.

²As Michel, "*ὁμολογέω*," pp. 215f., notes, "the formula of divine sonship (4:14; 6:6; 10:29) is frequently enough attested as the content of the baptismal confession." G. Bornkamm also suggests that "Jesus is the Son of God" is the "confession" referred to in Hebrews ("*Das Bekenntnis*," pp. 190f.). He goes on to say: "Sicher scheint mir zu sein, dass mindestens 1:3 ein solches Bekenntnis zum Sohne Gottes zu Grunde liegt: ὅς τῶν ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης . . . ἐκάθισεν ἐν δεξιᾷ τῆς μεγαλωσύνης ἐν ὑψηλοῖς " (p. 197). Cf. E. Käsemann, *Wandering People*, pp. 167-174) suggests that "the *ὁμολογία* of Hebrews not only denotes the primitive Christian liturgy of the community, but that in addition the Christology of Hebrews represents a detailed exposition and interpretation of the community's liturgical *ὁμολογία* " (p. 171). A. Seeberg, *Der Katechismus der Urchristenheit*, Theologische Bücherei 26 (München, 1966), esp. pp. 142-51, understands *ὁμολογία* in Hebrews as a reference to a 'Taufbekenntnis' (1 Tim. 6:12, a 'confession' which asserts the fact that 'Jesus is the Son of God.') J. Moffatt, *Hebrews*, p. 41 n. 1 suggests that "the contents of the *ὁμολογία* are suggested in the beliefs of 6:1f., which form the fixed principles and standards of the community, the Truth (10:26) to which assent was given at baptism.

³Cf. esp. 3:6, *κατάσχωμεν* (also 3:14) and 10:23, *κατέχωμεν* (also 10:35 and 12:12).

and here supplies them with a basis for doing so. Here at 4:14 he holds before his troubled readers the figure of Jesus the Son of God as their exalted and powerful great high priest, τὸν ἀρχιερεῖα τῆς ὁμολογίας ἡμῶν (3:1).

In brief, then, it may be said that by analogy with the familiar OT cultus, the author presents Jesus as the great high priest in an exalted position, high above the heavens and in the very presence of God Himself. But, as noted, that very position of Jesus as a great high priest in the true sanctuary (9:24) strongly implies his high priestly work on man's behalf; a work, given Jesus' exalted position, which Jesus certainly has the ability and power to accomplish effectively. The author then utilizes this figure of Jesus the transcendent and powerful great high priest in the service of his paraenesis. It is the basis upon which he exhorts his readers: κρατῶμεν τῆς ὁμολογίας. Such a high priest as Jesus would be a great source of hope and encouragement to hold fast to their Christian commitment in a time when that commitment was being sorely tried. The accent then in 4:14 lies heavily on a presentation of Jesus as the exalted heavenly high priest of his people, whose access to God and power to help is indisputable.

III. Hb. 4:15--Crux Interpretum

The author, however, is not satisfied to rest his exhortation to hold fast to the confession solely upon the remarkable image of the lofty and powerful high priest Jesus, but immediately he supplies a further motive for his readers to respond positively to his word of encouragement. "For" (γάρ), he continues, "we have not an high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin" (4:14 RSV). Thus,

the author enlarges his picture of Jesus as ἀρχιερεὺς , shifting now to the crucially important figure of the earthly Jesus and the role his earthly life played in his high priestly ministry. Indeed, this pivotal text, like 2:5-18 before, reveals the decisive significance which Jesus' earthly life possessed for the faith of the author of Hebrews. Not only is this ἀρχιερεὺς Jesus one who has "passed through the heavens," but also one who lived beneath them, experiencing the genuine suffering and crisis of a decidedly human existence--so poignantly demonstrated here by his temptation κατὰ πάντα καθ' ὁμοιότητα.

A. Jesus: A Sympathizing High Priest

By stating Jesus' position through the use of a double negative (οὐ γὰρ ἔχομεν . . . μή) the author even more emphatically stresses his point that the high priest Jesus surely can "sympathize with our weaknesses." Perhaps by the use of this double negative formulation the author anticipates a false conclusion on the part of his readers, namely that such an exalted high priest as just described could certainly not sympathize with man's earthly predicament characterized by weaknesses. Windisch suggests that it "klingt wie Abwehr einer falschen Lehre,"¹ a teaching Hebrews was anxious to counter. But whether anticipating such a wrong conception or correcting one already entertained, the author has firmly emphasized his positive point that in Jesus men do have a high priest "able to sympathize" with human frailties.

¹H. Windisch, Hebräerbrief, p. 37. C. Spicq too, Hébreux, II, p. 94, speaks of an "objection latente." See also the comments of Westcott, Hebrews, p. 106 and H. Montefiore, Hebrews, p. 91. H. Zimmermann, Das Bekenntnis, p. 170, writes: "Freilich kennt sie nur den erhöhten Herrn als ihren Hohenpriester; aber sie weiss ihre eigene Situation der äussern Bedrängnis und der innern Not mit ihm und seiner Stellung nicht in Einklang zu bringen. Sie fragt: Was nützt es uns, dass er die Himmel durchschritten hat, wenn er uns jetzt in unserer Not nicht nahe ist?"

Jesus' sympathy with man's weaknesses is a present and continuing sympathy (δυνάμενον συμπαθεῖν). For the author, Jesus' sympathy cannot be confined only to Jesus' earthly life, since here it is the exalted great high priest Jesus in the presence of God who can sympathize now. Clearly the author here affirms the continuity of the heavenly high priest with the earthly one, Jesus.¹ That sympathy which is immediately grounded in his earthly experience, he still possesses even now as the high priest who has "passed through the heavens." Thus Jesus' sympathy is not isolated solely in a past event, but somehow retains its vitality as a present reality in his high priestly ministry to his brethren. Yet such a consideration does not discount the earthly life of Jesus as irrelevant to his sympathizing with man's weaknesses. As will be argued below, the reverse is the case. How then should συμπαθεῖν ταῖς ἀσθενείαις ἡμῶν be understood here at Hb. 4:15?

"Sympathize" indicates Jesus' feeling for man's situation, a feeling arising not from his contemplation of their situation from outside that situation, detached from its hard reality, but rather a feeling arising from his experience within that same situation. However, συμπαθεῖν² does not necessarily denote a present actual suffering-with (συμπάσχω),³ a "sharing in one and the same experience of

¹H. Zimmermann, Das Bekenntnis, p. 172, strongly emphasizes the continuing sympathy of the heavenly high priest Jesus: "Das bedeutet: Mit seiner Erhöhung hat Jesus sein Menschsein und die Gegebenheiten seiner menschlichen Existenz nicht wie ein Kleid abgezogen; er hat sein Menschsein behalten und damit auch alles das, was zur menschlichen Existenz gehört."

²In the NT συμπαθεῖν is used only here and at Hb. 10:34 (συνπαθήσατε). The ^{adjective} noun συμπαθής occurs in 1 Pt. 3:8 in a list of virtues. On συμπαθεῖν see W. Michaelis, "πάσχω," TDNT, V, pp. 935f.

³Michaelis, "πάσχω," pp. 935f., notes that συμπάσχω is very rarely in the same sense as συμπαθεῖν. In the NT συμπάσχω only occurs at Ro. 8:17 and 1 Cor. 12:26, both of which imply an actual sharing of suffering.

suffering,"¹ but rather compassion or a fellow-feeling--disposition rather than act--with others who are suffering, a present fellow-feeling borne out of a past common experience. Michel rightly notes that " συμπαθεῖν ist wohl nicht psychologisch, sondern existentiell zu verstehen: der Erhöhte leidet mit der Schwachheit des Versuchten mit."² Although the author affirms the heavenly high priest's ability even now to remain somehow "in touch with the feeling of our infirmities" (AV), it nevertheless also remains clear that for the author that ability was created through Jesus' actual intimate experience of man's weaknesses during his earthly life. Peake speaks of it as a "fellow feeling created by the community of experience."³ And the milieu of that "community of experience," which made Jesus' sympathizing possible, was an earthly human existence characterized by its weaknesses.

In 4:15 ἀσθενεία refers specifically to those natural human weaknesses which supply the openings for temptation, channels for temptation.⁴ That here this is so is clear in light of the close

¹Delitzsch, Hebrews, I, p. 220.

²Michel, Hebräer (1975), p. 207.

³Peake, Hebrews, p. 130. It may also be worth noting that συμπαθεῖν does not intimate a sense of "condoning" everything, but of "fellow feeling which derives from full acquaintance with the seriousness of the situation" (Michaelis, " πᾶσι," p. 936). On a similar note O. Michel, Hebräer (1949), p. 56, writes that Jesus sympathizes "mit der menschlichen Schwachheit, nicht mit der menschlichen Sünde (ἀσθενείαις, nicht ἀμαρτίαις)."

⁴Like Paul, the author of Hebrews does not merely think of ἀσθενεία as referring to physical weakness or sickness (the most common sense of ἀσθενεία in the gospels, e.g., Mtt. 10:8; Lk. 13:11; Jn. 4:46) or to the general condition of man as 'weak' (e.g., Mk. 14:38; Mtt. 26:41). Rather Hebrews has reflected theologically on "weaknesses" and thus brings temptation and sin into connexion with ἀσθενεία. See the articles of G. Stählin, " ἀσθενής," TDNT, I, pp. 490-93; and H. -G. Link, "Weakness, Sickness, Disease, Paralysis," NIDNTT, III, pp. 993-99.

connexion of "weaknesses" with the immediately following reference to Jesus' being "tempted in all ways like us."¹ These "weaknesses" are "die Zustände, die uns der Versuchung ausliefern und damit der Gefahr der Sünde (Mk. 14:38)."² The author clearly differs from Paul's perspective on 'weakness' as seen in 2 Cor. 12-13. For Paul, ἀσθενεία was something to be boasted of and gloried in, the place where God reveals his power.³ In Hb. 4:15, man's "weaknesses" are those aspects of his existence which are exploited in temptation in order to bring forth sinful disobedience, "weaknesses" seen in connexion with faltering faith, opening the door to disbelief and neglect of the confession. "These ἀσθενείαι are the sources of temptation."⁴ Perhaps one may venture further and say that these ἀσθενείαι are, generally speaking, those aspects of man's whole existence--physical, moral, psychological--which render him susceptible to temptation to sin.⁵ These "weaknesses" are natural to the human condition and need not be seen as sinful in themselves. But precisely at these points man is undermined, subjected to the temptation to sin, tempted to perpetrate sinful action in order to satisfy an ostensibly natural need or desire. Jesus' ability to sympathize--even now as heavenly high priest--is grounded

¹See also Hb. 5:2, 3 where, with regard to the OT high priests, the author refers to their "weakness" and "sin."

²H. Windisch, Hebräerbrief, p. 37. O. Michel, Hebräer (1949), p. 56, comments: "Schwach ist der Mensch, weil die Versuchung an ihn herantritt, und weil er in der Möglichkeit des Falls und der Sünde steht (Mt. 6:13; Mk. 14:38; Lk. 22:40)."

³See esp. 2 Cor. 12:9 and 13:4 (of Christ himself).

⁴J. Moffatt, Hebrews, p. 59.

⁵J. Hering, Hebrews, p. 36, speaks of "physical and spiritual distresses." M. Dods, Hebrews, p. 284, understands them as "moral weaknesses, though often implicated with physical weaknesses." Cf. Westcott, Hebrews, p. 107.

in an authentic earthly experience of human weaknesses, a familiarity with "weaknesses" which is the presupposition of real temptation and the prerequisite of high priesthood.

This perspective also correlates with the analogy the author draws in the following chapter between the OT high priest and Jesus as a high priest. To be "beset with weakness" (5:2) like his brethren was an indispensable prerequisite for an ἀρχιερεὺς in order that he might be able μετρώσασθαι. . . τοῖς ἀγνοοῦσιν καὶ πλανωμένοις . According to 4:15, Jesus as the great high priest also was "beset by weakness," weakness which, as the author pointedly notes, consistently led the OT high priests into sin (5:3). Here then we see a clear point of the continuity of Jesus' high priesthood with that of the OT high priests. Both are "beset by weakness" and out of this community of experience with their people they are enabled to sympathize with them. Here the author boldly works with the assumption that had Jesus not been genuinely "beset by weakness," he could not have sympathized or "borne gently" with those whose inherent weaknesses provided the means for their waywardness. Indeed, his ability to lend effective aid in a time of need would have been put in doubt (4:16; 2:17f.). Clearly then it was critically important for the author's paraenetic concern that he should maintain that Jesus is a high priest who is able to sympathize with man's weaknesses.

B. Tempted High Priest

The significance of the author's next statement about the high priest Jesus cannot be overstated: ~~ὁ~~ πεπειρασμένον δὲ κατὰ πάντα καθ' ὁμοιότητα . H. Seesemann states that "among the NT epistles Hebrews emphasizes with particular urgency the fact that Jesus was

tempted during His life on earth."¹ O. Cullmann asserts that this statement is possibly "the boldest assertion of the completely human character of Jesus in the New Testament."² At this point certain questions arise concerning this reputedly bold statement on Jesus' temptations: How does the author describe Jesus' temptation? How does his perspective on Jesus' temptations relate to that of the gospel traditions? And, what significance did this reference to Jesus' temptations have for the author of Hebrews and his readers?

1. After the negative formulation beginning at v.15, the adversative δέ now emphatically introduces a decidedly positive statement. Yet πεπειρασμένον δέ does not merely serve to reiterate the fact that Jesus can sympathize with man's weaknesses. Rather, it elucidates the thought that Jesus can sympathize, specifically pointing now to that precise point at which Jesus' weaknesses were most clearly seen to be real--in his temptation.

Though πειράζειν may be understood generally as "test," here the developed religious sense of an enticement to sin is clearly in view--a sense best rendered "tempt."³ The author's assertion that Jesus remained "without sin" (χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας) further implies that temptation and sin were linked together in the author's thought, though he clearly did not regard temptation itself as sin.⁴

¹H. Seesemann, "πειρά," TDNT, VI, p. 33.

²O. Cullmann, Christology, p. 95.

³Seesemann, *op. cit.*; see also W. Schneider, C. Brown and H. Haarbeck, "Tempt, Test, Approve," NIDNTT, III, pp. 798-811.

⁴Though the line between temptation and sin is apparently an assumption of the writer of Hebrews, that line between the two is most difficult to draw. This is especially true in light of the radical understanding Jesus himself had of sin--sin being not merely an overt act, but sin consisting even of the intention of the heart (Mtt. 5: 21ff.). The perplexing question concerning Jesus' experience of

By κατὰ πάντα the author indicates that Jesus' temptations were comprehensive, covering the whole range of temptations to which man is subject. This is a strong statement harbouring no reserve and is reminiscent of a similarly unreserved assertion in Hb. 2:17: κατὰ πάντα τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς ὁμοιωθῆναι .¹ The words κατὰ πάντα forbid any limiting of these temptations to certain areas. The author fully extends the scope of these temptations to include every aspect of human experience whether great or small, significant or trivial, climactic or mundane.

The phrase καθ' ὁμοιότητα² (literally "according to similarity") underlines the similarity of Jesus' temptations to the temptations mankind undergoes. It is usually translated "like as we are" (AV) or "as we are" (RSV; cf. GNB, NIV, JB), though the NEB interestingly renders it "one who, because of his likeness to us, has been tested every way."³ Wrestling with these words, H. Windisch writes:

"Könnte man auch auf die Personen beziehen: entsprechend der zwischen

temptation therefore is this: Can temptation be real if there is not at least in the one tempted even the smallest desire for or thought of succumbing to sin? For a thoughtful treatment of this issue see C. F. D. Moule, "The Manhood of Jesus in the New Testament," in Christ, Faith and History, ed. S. W. Sykes and J. P. Clayton (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 95-110; and John Knox, The Humanity and Divinity of Christ: A Study of Pattern in Christology (Cambridge, 1967), pp. 47ff.

¹The passages 2:17f. and 4:14-16 correspond both linguistically and theologically quite closely to one another. In both Jesus is presented as the ἀρχιερεὺς ; in both Jesus' experience of temptation is set forth; in both Jesus' similarity to and oneness with his brethren is emphasized; and in both it is the tempted high priest Jesus who can bring "help" to his people now suffering and tempted.

²καθ' ὁμοιότητα is a strengthened form of ὁμοίως . See J. Schneider, "ὅμοιος," TDNT, V, pp. 186-99 (esp. pp. 189f. on ὁμοιότης). Cf. Hb. 7:15.

³The NEB also gives the more frequent rendering "as we are" in its margin.

ihm und uns bestehenden Gleichheit, doch würde auch daraus sich die Gleichheit der Versuchungen ergeben.¹ Though the sense given by the NEB is possible, the more frequently accepted rendering, "as we are," seems preferable.² From the perspective of this passage it seems more likely that the point at issue is the similarity of Jesus' temptations to man's. Therefore, for Hebrews, Jesus' temptations cover the whole range of human temptations to which man, through his weaknesses, has been subjected.

2. But can one be more specific about these temptations which the author of Hebrews had in view? This of course raises the question of the relationship between the statement at Hb. 4:15 concerning Jesus' being tempted κατὰ πάντα καθ' ὁμοιότητα with the various segments of the gospel traditions which speak of Jesus' being tempted. Notably, only in Hebrews and the synoptics in the NT do we discover any mention of the temptation of Jesus.

Undoubtedly the most notable example of Jesus' experience of temptation in the synoptics must be his encounter with the πειράζων in the wilderness (Mtt. 4:1ff.; Mk. 1:13; Lk. 4:1ff.). The critical placement of the story of these temptations, just after his baptism and just before the start of his ministry, strongly suggests reference to Jesus' messianic mission. Here Satan tempted Jesus to turn aside from his messianic mission, to turn away from his path of obedience to God. Though it is debatable whether it is the primary focus of the wilderness temptation pericope, certainly Jesus' firm determination to

¹Windisch, Hebräerbrief, p. 37.

²J. Schneider, "ὅμοιος," p. 190 n.2, asserts that the interpretation of καθ' ὁμοιότητα as referring to the persons--"because of his likeness to us"--cannot be allowed because of the words χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας. Rather, Schneider says, it points to the similarity of temptations.

obey God throughout the temptations stands out in the story. But, as is commonly acknowledged, these temptations are patently messianic temptations; twice the πειράζων commences his temptation of Jesus with the words "if you are the Son of God," an echo of the taunting words at the crucifixion (Mtt. 27:40). Therefore these distinctive temptations of Jesus as Son of God in the wilderness can hardly be understood as temptations "like ours." Indeed, these wilderness messianic temptations of Jesus set Him off as distinct from men; the precise opposition of the express intention of the author of Hebrews in mentioning Jesus' temptation. Therefore it appears that the wilderness temptation story of the synoptics is foreign to the thought of the author of Hebrews when he speaks of Jesus being tempted "in every way like us."¹

Interestingly, the postscript to the temptation story preserved only in the Lucan account (Lk. 4:13) suggests the further "temptation" of Jesus after the wilderness incident.² But to what in the gospels could this refer?

At the Last Supper Jesus addresses these words to his disciples: ὑμεῖς δὲ ἐστε οἱ διαμεμενηκότες μετ' ἐμοῦ ἐν τοῖς πειρασμοῖς μου (Lk. 22:28). This might refer to the temptations which hounded Jesus throughout his life. Yet the precise sense of πειρασμός is admittedly unclear here. Possibly it has the sense of "dangers" or "trials" (cf. Mtt. 6:13).³ Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the thought of

¹H. Windisch, Hebräerbrief, p. 38, notes that the sphere of the temptation in the so-called temptation-story is not in the human nature of Jesus, as it is in Hebrews.

²ὁ διάβολος ἀπέστη ἀπ' αὐτοῦ ἄχρι καιροῦ (Lk. 4:13).

³Seesemann, "πειρά," p. 35. For the whole phrase Matthew has only οἱ ἀκολουθήσαντες μοι. The words ἐν τοῖς πειρασμοῖς could be seen as a Lucan insert meant to link these words of Jesus to the contemporary Christian community, though I. H. Marshall, The Gospel of

obedience even unto death was the crucial underlying theme here in the synoptic account. It is also interesting to note that in Lk. 22:28 Jesus' disciples somehow can share with Jesus in his temptations (πειρασμοίς).

The incident which resulted in Jesus' stern rebuke of Peter (Mtt. 16:23; Mk. 8:33), however, seems a more certain example of Jesus being tempted. This seems so particularly in light of Jesus' words of rebuke to Peter which hauntingly resemble the words of his rebuke of Satan in the wilderness temptation story: "Παρε ὀπίσω μου, Σατανᾶ" (Mtt. 4:10). At the heart of the issue here was the temptation for Jesus to avoid suffering, to turn his back on his mission. Again, Jesus' obedience comes to the forefront as the dominant theme as Jesus resolutely sets his face toward Jerusalem.

The many references to the tempting questions of Jesus' opponents may also be understood as "temptations," as the descriptive formula of introduction suggests (πειραγεῖν αὐτόν Mk. 8:11, 33; 10:2; 12:15; Mtt. 22:35; Hb. 12:3).

But the incident most scholars consider the clearest case of Jesus' experiencing severe temptation is his experience in Gethsemane (Mtt. 26:38ff.; Mk. 14:38ff.; Lk. 22:39ff.).¹ Clearly struggling here with the heavy cost of obedience (Hb. 5:7), Jesus again felt the agonizingly strong temptation to avoid suffering, plainly not wishing

Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text (Exeter, 1978), p. 816, suggests that there is no linguistic evidence that substantiates this. In any case, the probable sense of πειρασμός in this passage is "trials" or "difficulties."

¹See esp. O. Michel, Hebräer (1949), p. 57; H. Windisch, Hebräerbrief, pp. 38f.; and H. Seesemann, "πεῖρα," p. 36. Seesemann comments: "That the prayer of Jesus in Gethsemane . . . is regarded as a prayer in temptation may be seen from Heb. 5:7" (p. 36). Indeed, this present study will turn to this Gethsemane allusion in Hb. 5:7f. in the following section.

to taste of that cup (Mtt. 26:39). Yet he determined to remain obedient to the will of the Father: "Nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt" (Mtt. 26:39, RSV). Here, above all other places in the synoptics, Jesus is represented as visibly struggling with the heavy price of obedience to God, passionately praying to "him who was able to save him from death" (Hb. 5:7). Jesus, the sympathizing high priest, intimately involved with man's weaknesses,¹ understood as a man the fear of death and of suffering (Hb. 2:14f.). It should be noted that the word πειρασμός is only used in reference to the disciples, not Jesus himself.² Yet Jesus' warning to the disciples, 'Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation,' seems to indicate that they should emulate his own watchfulness and prayerfulness as he himself endured intense temptation in Gethsemane. For the disciples too, this was the hour of their temptation to fold under the pressures of their human "weakness"--"the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Mtt. 26:41) --and fall into disobedience.

In light of this brief overview of the synoptics' references to Jesus' experience of temptation, what observations can be made vis-a-vis the statement of Hb. 4:15?

(i) Hebrews' description of Jesus' experience of temptation (κατὰ πάντα καθ' ὁμοιότητα) presents a far more radical statement about Jesus' exposure to temptation than that contained in the gospels. O. Cullmann declares that this statement in Hb. 4:15 is "extraordinarily far-reaching."³ Cullmann rightly points out that κατὰ πάντα καθ'

¹It is perhaps of note that the words πειρασμός and ἀσθενής occur together both here in Hb. 4:15 and in the Gethsemane account in the gospels (Mk. 14:38).

²Seesemann, "πεῖρα," p. 36.

³Cullmann, Christology, pp. 94f.

ὁμοιότητα makes it impossible to restrict Jesus' temptations to such as those recorded in the gospels.¹ In Hebrews Jesus' temptations were closely related to his experience as a man of human weaknesses--weaknesses which were the source of Jesus' temptations and which made them similar to man's. That Jesus was tempted κατὰ πάντα καθ' ὁμοιότητα suggests "the common temptations connected with our human weakness, the temptations to which we are exposed simply because we are men."²

Michel comments that there is

eine Versuchlichkeit, die sich nicht auf den messianischen Beruf Jesu beschränkt (Mt. 4:1-11), sondern Sein ganzes Leben umfasst (κατὰ πάντα); sie macht ihn ganz uns Menschen gleich (καθ' ὁμοιότητα = 2:17 ὁμοιωθῆναι).³

It is precisely because of his experience of the human situation from within, as exemplified by his real encounter with temptations in every way like man's, that Jesus is able to sympathize with man in his weak state. That Jesus was exposed to such temptations as described in Hebrews presses beyond the limited picture of Jesus' temptations preserved in the synoptics.

Yet to mine this reference in Hebrews for biographical material would prove futile; indeed, it would be unwarranted and unnecessary speculation. This reference in Hb. 4:15 is a generalized reference to Jesus' earthly experience of temptation, devoid of specific historical data. Perhaps reference to such information was unnecessary for the author's purposes at this point. That he had some information at hand would seem highly likely, though it would be conjecture at Hb. 4:15 to suggest anything in particular. Nevertheless, the author of Hebrews was clearly concerned with this particular "how" of Jesus' earthly

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³O. Michel, Hebräer (1949), p. 55.

life. At this crucial point there can be little doubt that for the author of Hebrews Jesus' human life was a life lived under temptation (2:17f.).

(ii) A second observation follows from our first, namely that Jesus' full and authentic human experience of temptation was a far more significant issue in Hebrews than for any other NT writer. There is a singular urgency in Hebrews to establish the reality of Jesus' temptation that is unparalleled anywhere else in the NT. The paraenetic and christological rationale for this peculiar concern will be explored more thoroughly below. Suffice it to say at this point that in the synoptics Jesus' susceptibility to and experience of temptation similar to man's is of secondary significance (apart perhaps from the Gethsemane pericope). On the other hand, the author of Hebrews places great weight upon Jesus' susceptibility to and experience of human temptation, an emphasis which witnesses to its foundational significance in Hebrews.

(iii) But there are elements of continuity in Hebrews and the synoptics relating to Jesus' temptation. In Hebrews there is a special connexion of Jesus' temptation to suffering; a connexion which also exists in the context of the synoptic reference to Jesus' temptation. The close connexion of Jesus' temptation with suffering has already been made in Hb. 2:18: ἐν ᾧ γὰρ πέπονθεν αὐτὸς πειρασθεὶς . Michel emphasizes this point and makes special reference to the Gethsemane scene of Jesus' temptation as connected to agonizing travail and suffering (Hb. 5:7ff.). Both Jesus and the church struggled with the temptation posed by the fear of death and suffering (Hb. 2:15; 12:4 μέχρις αἵματος). In light of this, Michel reckons that both Hebrews and the synoptics are connected in a special way to the "Martyrer-

situation."¹ One may also allude to Jesus' clash with Peter (Mtt. 16: 16ff.; Mk. 8:33ff.), Jesus' saying at the Last Supper (Lk. 22:28), and the taunting words of Jesus' revilers at the foot of the cross (Mtt. 27:40) as occasions of Jesus' temptation to avoid suffering. Here then, in the connexion of temptation with suffering, we do find a perspective on temptation common to both the synoptics and Hebrews.

(iv) It also appears that both Hebrews and the synoptics, when mentioning Jesus' temptations, point to an issue of surpassing importance for both of them, Jesus' obedience. That this is so for the author of Hebrews, we have already noted. It is also true for the synoptic references. Time and again, whether in the wilderness with the Devil, in a frank discussion with followers, in an emotional clash with a close friend, in the penetrating loneliness of Gethsemane, or in the taunting words of enemies, Jesus was tempted to abandon his resolve to obey God to the end. Repeatedly, according to the gospels, Jesus chose the path of obedience to God and the mission to which God had called him.

3. In light of the investigation up to this point, what significance then did Jesus' temptation have for the author of Hebrews and his readers? And how has he utilized his reference to Jesus' temptations?

For the author of Hebrews there could be no greater "proof of the capacity for having sympathy"² than Jesus' real experience of being tempted "every way as we are." Jesus' experience of temptation was the supremely meaningful instance of his sharing of man's troubled existence. If he had not actually shared in this particular aspect

¹O. Michel, Hebräer (1949), p. 57.

²G. Lünemann, Hebrews, p. 188.

of man's human condition, it could not possibly be said of him that he was "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." This assertion carries with it certain key implications. If Jesus' temptations were in every way like man's, and if the supremely characteristic thing about man's experience of temptation is the existence of the possibility of yielding or not-yielding to that temptation,¹ then for Jesus' temptations to have been authentically human he must have possessed that same freedom either to-yield or not-to-yield to temptation. If this possibility in Jesus cannot be affirmed, it would hopelessly compromise the author's radical assertion of Jesus' temptation κατὰ πάντα καθ' ὁμοιότητα . His temptations and his response to them would then be utterly irrelevant to people struggling under

¹Theologians have long discussed the posse peccare, non posse non peccare, posse non peccare and non posse peccare with regard to Jesus. The various avenues of investigation in this long discussion press beyond the limit of the present study. However, I must say that to exclude the posse peccare as such with regard to Jesus and to adopt an absolute non posse peccare position (often done by asserting the hegemony of Jesus' divine nature over his human nature where sin is concerned--for an example of this see W. G. T. Shedd, Dogmatic Theology, II (New York, 1891), pp. 330ff.) seriously endangers any affirmation of the complete humanity of Jesus. Cf. K. Barth, CD, IV.2, pp. 92f.; CD, I.2, pp. 147-59; E. Brunner, The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption, trans. O. Wyon (London, 1952), pp. 322ff; John Knox, op. cit.; C. F. D. Moule, "The Manhood of Jesus in the New Testament," in Christ, Faith and History, ed. S. W. Sykes and J. P. Clayton (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 95-110; Reinhold Niebuhr, The Nature and Destiny of Man: A Christian Interpretation, II (London, 1943), pp. 71ff.; W. Pannenberg, Jesus--God and Man, trans. L. Wilkins and D. A. Priebe (London, 1968), esp. part 9; J. A. T. Robinson, The Human Face of God (London, 1973), pp. 88ff.; "Need Jesus Have Been Perfect?" in Christ, Faith and History, ed. S. W. Sykes and J. P. Clayton (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 39-52; S. W. Sykes, "The Theology of the Humanity of Christ," in Christ, Faith and History, ed. Sykes and Clayton (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 53-72; D. Wellbourn, God Dimensional Man (London, 1972), pp. 26ff.; and C. Ullmann, The Sinlessness of Jesus: An Evidence for Christianity, trans. S. Taylor (from the seventh altered and enlarged German edition, 1st edition in 1870) (Edinburgh, 1901).

temptations (2:18, τοῖς πειραζομένοις). The freedom not-to-yield possesses no meaning for man unless accompanied as well by the freedom-to-yield. As J. A. T. Robinson pointedly states: "He must have had the freedom to sin or not to sin--or it would not have been our freedom he shared."¹ For Jesus to be tempted κατὰ πάντα καθ' ὁμοιότητα there must have existed in Jesus' person a real tension between yielding and not yielding. The temptations must have exerted an actual pull or attraction on Jesus.

To speak of Jesus' temptation begs the question of his response to that temptation. It was commonly acknowledged that the OT high priests proved to be sinners (5:3; 7:27), but what of the ἀρχιερεὺς μέγας Jesus?² The immediately following controversial phrase, χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας , shows that in Hebrews a crucial issue at stake in Jesus' experience of temptation was his response, his not-yielding to temptation, or stated positively, his obedience. But such obedience would be meaningless to mankind had it been automatic or inherited, involving no real personal struggle in the crucible of man's troubled existence.³ Thus it is only in light of Jesus' real experience of temptation κατὰ πάντα καθ' ὁμοιότητα that Jesus' obedience gains significance for men. Commenting on the phrase χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας , O. Cullmann writes:

¹Robinson, Human Face of God, p. 94.

²The silence in 5:2, 3 concerning the high priest Jesus as a sinner is conspicuous. Hebrews confesses that Jesus shared man's weaknesses, but cannot bring himself to identify Jesus with the OT high priests as one who was a sinner.

³J. Moffatt, Hebrews, p. li, writes: "One of the characteristics which set Ἰησοῦς Ἐβραίου apart in the early Christian literature is the idea that Jesus did not possess sinlessness simply as a prerogative of his divine Sonship or as a requisite for the validity of his priestly function. It was not a mere endowment. The idea rather is that he had to realize and maintain it by a prolonged moral conflict ἐν ταῖς ἡμεραῖς τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ ."

Hebrews' claim that Jesus was sinless becomes meaningful only in connection with the strong emphasis on his susceptibility to temptation. Unless he was really tempted, the claim that Jesus was without sin is fundamentally meaningless.¹

This issue of Jesus' sinlessness and obedience will be examined more thoroughly below.

For the author of Hebrews, reference to Jesus' temptation establishes unquestionably Jesus' solidarity with his people at the most crucial level--at the level of human weaknesses, of temptations which exploit those weaknesses, of suffering which is intimately connected with the experience of temptation, and of genuine human freedom under temptation, a freedom which implies an arduous struggle against the human ability to disobey the will of God. No statement in the rest of the NT so concretely places Jesus in the realm of humanity as this brief statement in Hb. 4:15.

Yet in Hebrews Jesus' earthly life, his unity with men in their weaknesses and temptations, was not a keenly felt embarrassment; on the contrary, the author seems to glory in Jesus' genuine humanity. He glories in it because of its foundational significance for his paraenesis and christology.² Precisely because of Jesus' susceptibility to and experience of temptation he is able to sympathize with man's weaknesses, the indispensable requirement for Jesus to be able to minister effectively as man's great high priest (5:1-4). The urgent need for man for such a high priestly ministry renders invalid any objection to the seemingly humiliating means whereby it is obtained. In the scheme of Hebrews' high priestly christology, Jesus' earthly temptations prove his ability to sympathize with mankind and its weak-

¹Cullmann, Christology, p. 94.

²Knox, Humanity and Divinity, pp. 40ff., makes this point strongly. Also see Zimmermann, Das Bekenntnis, pp. 172f.

nesses, and thereby establishes his ability as a high priest to represent his people adequately in the presence of God.

While the reference to Jesus' temptation in Hb. 4:15 is of unquestionable significance for the author's high priest christology, its special relevance is to the author's paraenetic concern to exhort and encourage his readers who are now struggling to maintain their Christian confession in the face of temptation and suffering. The author of Hebrews has no biographical intentions. For him, Jesus' temptation was not merely a past historical event--though it was that--but a real historical event that possessed a faith-engendering quality for others in the present. As Michel comments:

Wie die Evangelien nicht Geschichtsberichte im historischem Sinn sein, sondern Glauben erwecken wollen (Joh 20:31), so ist auch für unseren Brief die Versuchlichkeit und die Sündlosigkeit Jesu keine historische Tatsache, die es festzuhalten gilt, sondern ein geschichtlicher Zug der Person Jesu, der für den hohenpriesterlichen Beruf des Christus und Seine Hilfe für uns wichtig ist. Die Geschichte ist wirkliche Geschichte, aber sie steht im Dienst des Glaubens.¹

But what sort of scenario underlies Hebrews' exhortation to hold fast their christian confession and to expect with confidence help from God? What relevance did his specific reference to Jesus' temptation and sympathy have for Hebrews' readers? Certainly the author and his readers knew of Jesus as the exalted Lord, one who was "holy, blameless, unstained, separated from sinners, exalted above the heavens" (7:26). But at the same time the church was acutely aware of its own difficult situation in the world, a situation characterized by weaknesses, suffering, and temptation to neglect God's Word of salvation spoken through His Son (1:1-2:4), to let loose their hold on their Christian confession (4:14). The precise nature of the difficulties and pressures Hebrews' readers faced is, of course, one of the mysteries

¹Michel, Hebräer (1949), p. 57.

of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Yet it seems clear that Hebrews' readers were under severe enough pressures to endanger their grip on their Christian faith. Of what aid, they may have asked, could such a distant and exalted Lord be, so removed from our agonizing predicament? How could such an one be in touch with our present situation? Perhaps to such doubts as these the author responds by calling their attention to Jesus' earthly life¹ characterized by weaknesses and temptation, with all that this implied. Jesus, the author assures them, knew such predicaments. Furthermore, Jesus not only was, but still is near to man precisely at his point of gravest need. Even though Jesus is an exalted great high priest, this does not mean that he has taken off his humanity and the reality of his human existence like clothing in order to don the clothing of divine lordship. Somehow the humanity of Jesus continues to have an abiding significance and he is still able "to sympathize with our weaknesses." Here then, Jesus is most closely related to the church and its need. Here, in his earthly life under temptation, Jesus is especially near to mankind; he is not far-removed. And here the author's exhortation and encouragement to his readers gains significant strength, for precisely at this point Jesus identifies most closely with his people under pressure.

C. Sinless High Priest

To his assertion that Jesus was 'tempted in every way like us,' the author attaches this well known and often quoted phrase, $\chi\omega\rho\iota\varsigma$ $\acute{\alpha}\mu\alpha\rho\tau\acute{\iota}\alpha\varsigma$. This comment is frequently employed as a proof text to

¹Zimmermann, Das Bekenntnis, pp. 172f., suggests that the readers of Hebrews well knew Jesus as exalted Lord, but that their present difficult Sitz-im-leben caused them to question the ability of such an one to understand and help. Zimmermann asserts that the author of Hebrews corrected this attitude by emphatically underlining the reality of Jesus' earthly life and the continuity of the earthly Jesus with the heavenly high priest.

establish unarguably that 'Jesus never sinned.' But however firmly believed and vigorously asserted, such a simple understanding of this phrase in Hb. 4:15 usually reflects an inadequate consideration of the many thorny issues raised by this apparently straightforward statement. Indeed, several factors need to be taken into account before arriving at any conclusions.

1. There is a certain amount of ambiguity concerning the precise way in which χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας relates to πεπειρασμένον δὲ κατὰ πάντα καθ' ὁμοίότητα. Does it refer to the result of Jesus' temptations (Jesus' response to temptation was sinless)? Or, does it serve to modify and qualify the radicality of κατὰ πάντα (Jesus was not tempted by previous sin)? The interpreters who address this problem are divided in their opinions, though a majority prefer the sense that Jesus' response was sinless. H. Montefiore may be right in saying that the author of Hebrews probably did not distinguish between the two options.¹ However in light of the importance the author attaches to Jesus' obedience (5:7ff.; 10:1ff.), it appears probable that here too at 4:15 he was primarily concerned with the result of Jesus' temptations, an obedient response to God's will. Indeed, it seems doubtful that he intended any qualification of πεπειρασμένον κατὰ πάντα at all. That he almost immediately emphasizes the issue of Jesus' 'learning obedience' (5:7ff.) would also support this interpretation. But even assuming this understanding is correct, the sense of qualification that excludes Jesus' being tempted by previous sins may be a corollary of it.² But how then, in a more precise way, should one

¹Montefiore, Hebrews, p. 91.

²Moffatt, Hebrews, p. 59, admits: "It is true that χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας does exclude some temptations. Strictly speaking, κατὰ πάντα is modified by this restriction, since a number of our worst temptations arise out of sin previously committed. But this was not

conceive of the sinless response of Jesus to temptation? Does the author mean that Jesus never sinned, that he was sinless throughout his life, or is this saying more than the author himself actually intended? Prior to addressing this question, note should be taken of the theological context in which Jesus' sinlessness plays a part.

2. Plainly there is in the Epistle to the Hebrews a certain theological framework within which Jesus' sinlessness plays a significant role. This has led some scholars to suggest that Hebrews' assertion of Jesus' sinlessness is solely a theological judgment, not an historical one.¹ But is this a valid assessment of the evidence?²

In 4:14ff. the author designates Jesus as a high priest, now exalted to the very presence of God (4:14), but also remaining sympathetic with man's weaknesses (4:15). In the following verses (5:1ff.) he draws an analogy between the high priest Jesus and the OT high priests. The OT high priests were beset by weakness and consistently fell into sin (5:1-3). But the author of Hebrews, while boldly speaking of Jesus' susceptibility to temptation, remains silent in chapter 5 concerning what would seem to follow logically from the analogy with the OT high priests, namely that Jesus also sinned. This silence in

in the writer's mind at all. He is too eager, to enter into any psychological analysis."

¹Windisch, Hebräerbrief, pp. 39f.; Robinson, Human Face of God, p. 89; Niebuhr, Nature and Destiny of Man, II, pp. 73ff.; et al.

²That Jesus' sinlessness cannot be proven or judged from history would seem obvious. Who, for instance, could say whether or not Jesus had lust in his heart for a woman? Or was genuinely angry with someone (Mtt. 5:22) (what of the rather unceremonious dismissal of the moneychangers)? Clearly Jesus would have been considered a sinner by the contemporary Jewish hierarchy, for on many occasions he knowingly transgressed (their interpretation of) the Law. However, the question at issue here is whether or not the author of Hebrews understood "without sin" as the earthly response of the man Jesus to his temptations, or exclusively as a necessary christological postulate.

Hb. 5:1-10 concerning Jesus' experience of sin is noteworthy. In 7:26-28 the author again presents Jesus as the sinless high priest, ὅσιος, ἄκακος, ἁμιάντος, κεχωρισμένος ἀπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτωλῶν. . Such a high priest as this, he argues, has clear supremacy over the OT Aaronic priesthood, a priesthood well known in Israel's history for its sinfulness, a sinfulness which indeed necessitated daily sacrifices. For the author of Hebrews, Jesus' sinlessness was evidence of the manifest superiority of Jesus' high priestly ministry over that exercised by the OT high priests. But in addition to the depiction of Jesus as the sinless high priest, Hebrews envisages Jesus as the sin offering itself, the pure and spotless sacrificial victim: ὧς διὰ πνεύματος αἰωνίου ἑαυτὸν προσήνεγκεν ἁμῶν τῷ θεῷ (9:14). This double picture of Jesus as both sacrificer and sacrifice, as priest and offering, lies at the heart of Hebrews' high priestly christology; and the sinlessness of Jesus is a critical element in both parts.

Elsewhere in the NT, statements concerning Jesus' sinlessness are also coloured by theological considerations. The analogy of Jesus with the OT spotless sacrificial lamb was certainly not unknown (1 Pt. 1:19; Jn. 1:29). It was a widespread NT understanding that Jesus took man's sins upon himself, though he himself was sinless (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Jn. 3:5; 1 Pt. 2:22/Isa. 53:9; 1 Pt. 3:18). Though it is not explicitly stated in terms of a high priestly office--the unique contribution of Hebrews in the NT--, setting Jesus' sinlessness in the context of an atonement theology is apparently common NT theological ground. It seems highly probable that the author of Hebrews would have been aware of this interpretation of Jesus' sinlessness so widespread in early Christian thought.

But what other influence can be traced in Hebrews' thought about Jesus' sinlessness, especially Jesus as a sinless high priest?

After an investigation of the high priest's character in the OT, Ecclesiasticus, the Testament of the 12 Patriarchs (T12P), the DSS, Josephus, Philo, and the rabbinical literature, R. A. Stewart rightly concluded that "Jewish literature in general did not and could not postulate any sinlessness in the mortal representative of the high priesthood."¹ The only possible exception, argues Stewart, is the notorious chapter 43 of Levi in the T12P.² But special note must be made of Philo. Indeed, Philo does refer to a sinless high priest.³ Much could and has been said concerning Philo's conception of the high priest, but suffice it to say here, as Stewart rightly points out, that Philo's sinless high priest is really the divine Logos and something of an intellectual abstraction.⁴ The Logos for Philo can hardly be said to be involved in man's frailties and agonizing temptations. Moffatt writes that "the idea of the Logos as unstained by contact with the material universe is very different from this conception of Jesus

¹R. A. Stewart, "The Sinless High Priest," NTS 14 (1967-8), pp. 126-135 (131).

²Ibid. In the remarkable Chapter 43 of Levi (T12P) the writer draws an extraordinary picture of an exalted eschatological messiah-high priest whose freedom from sin seems clearly implied (v.9). However, the provenance of Levi 43, whether Jewish or Christian, is a matter of some debate. The compatibility of Levi 43 with the christology of Hebrews (esp. 43:1-3) is also noteworthy. See esp. M. de Jonge, "Christian Influence in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs," in Studies on the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, ed. M. de Jonge (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1975), pp. 193-246 (esp. pp. 210-229). The section in this study below on Hb. 7:14 examines part of that relationship between the T12P and Hebrews.

³Philo, *De spec. leg.* I.230; *De fuga.* 108-110, 115; also *De somn.* II.185; *De spec. leg.* III.134.

⁴op. cit. p. 35. R. Williamson, Philo and Hebrews, pp. 409-434 (esp. pp. 430f.), shares this view. In his discussion of this issue Williamson concludes that "there is absolutely nothing in what the Writer of Hebrews says about the Son-High Priest which indicates that Philo's language and ideas played a determinative part in his own thinking" (431).

as actually tempted and scatheless."¹ To be sure, their terminology may be similar, since both are drawing on the OT, but their conceptions of the sinless high priest are totally dissimilar. Philo's thought is directed toward an abstract philosophical concept, but Hebrews is speaking of an historical flesh and blood person, Jesus.

Therefore, it appears that Hebrews' concept of Jesus' sinlessness probably reflects an awareness of early Christian traditions about Jesus in which Jesus' sinlessness had already been theologically interpreted--an interpretation which the author of Hebrews adopts and adapts into his own unique high priest christology. But can it be said then that he thought of Jesus' sinlessness only as a theological postulate? Or, does not *χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας* reflect an understanding of Jesus' earthly life, however theologically coloured it may be?

3. When considering the reference to Jesus' sinlessness in 4:15 it is of paramount importance that *χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας* be understood in view of its close connexion with the immediately preceding statement that Jesus was "tempted in every way like us." This assertion is particularly crucial for an understanding of *χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας* . This context must not be ignored nor minimized in significance.

The emphatic assertion that Jesus was "tempted in every way like us" clearly places the high priest Jesus in the earthly human realm. To this decidedly earthly perspective on Jesus, the author of Hebrews attaches the statement *χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας* . Therefore, in Hb. 4:15 Jesus' sinlessness was not cast in an exclusively theological framework, but also, significantly, in the framework of his human life which "tempted in every way like us" brings sharply into view. O. Cullmann writes:

¹Moffatt, Hebrews, p. 59.

As a result of this connection between sinlessness and susceptibility to temptation, "without sin" appears less dogmatic in Hb. 4:15 than in any other passage we have quoted about Jesus' sinlessness--although even here in the background is the thought of the sacrificial lamb without blemish.¹

C. F. D. Moule also notes the obvious importance of Jesus' sinlessness for the theology of the various NT writers, yet he concludes that "it nevertheless constitutes a NT conviction about the character of his manhood."² In light of the context of Hb. 4:15, this seems particularly true here. But even if this is granted, certain questions still remain. Did the author of Hebrews intend to say that Jesus was perpetually sinless, that he never sinned? When in Jesus' earthly life did he reckon Jesus to be "without sin"?

The statement that Jesus was "tempted in every way like us" seems to imply that Jesus, like mankind, was tempted throughout life, that he actually struggled daily with weaknesses and temptation. If the author presents Jesus here as wrestling with these temptations throughout his life, then his corresponding description of Jesus' response to those temptations would suggest his sinless response throughout life as well. Doubtless there were climacterics in Jesus' lifelong experience of temptation and his response to those temptations, yet the basic thrust of Hebrews' thought here remains that as Jesus was tempted throughout the course of his life, he also sinlessly responded to those temptations at every point along the way.

Therefore, on the one hand, one should eliminate any understanding of $\chi\omega\rho\iota\varsigma \acute{\alpha}\mu\alpha\rho\tau\acute{\iota}\alpha\varsigma$ in Hb. 4:15 that would locate Jesus' sinlessness already at the beginning of his human existence. According

¹Cullmann, Christology, p. 94.

²Moule, "Manhood of Jesus," p. 103.

to W. Pannenberg,¹ Augustine was chiefly responsible for emphasizing the view that Jesus' sinlessness was a condition which obtained at the very beginning of Jesus' human existence, and thus de-emphasizing Jesus' actual sinless living. Augustine's view was clearly rooted in his anxiety to exempt Jesus from the taint of 'original sin,' which for Augustine was transmitted via natural generation. This concern naturally led Augustine to look to Jesus' miraculous conception and Mary's virginity in order to resolve this problem.² But what then of Mary's own sinful state? A doctrine of the immaculate conception would answer this objection, Jesus thus being born sinlessly of a purified mother, but Pannenberg rightly criticizes this as "a very artificial construction!"³ Reinhold Niebuhr also censures this "metaphysical" interpretation of Jesus' sinlessness, wryly adding that in thus referring to the Virgin birth to substantiate Jesus' sinlessness, one is logically led into "an infinite regression of immaculate conceptions."⁴ Pannenberg also notes a second view which served to transfer the origin of Jesus' sinlessness back from his earthly life to the event of his human origin, namely the unification of the Logos with Jesus' human nature at the beginning of his human existence.⁵ Nevertheless, this concern to locate Jesus' sinlessness at the event of his human origin as a condition of his human nature is entirely foreign to the thought of Hb. 4:15. It is illegitimate to read ideas of "original sin" into

¹Pannenberg, God and Man, pp. 357ff.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Niebuhr, Nature and Destiny, p. 76.

⁵Pannenberg, God and Man, pp. 358f.

this passage.¹ Indeed, Hebrews does not present an abstract conception of Jesus' sinlessness, but, as the context reveals, an actual response of Jesus to temptations which he suffered throughout his life--the response of his life which could in no way be reckoned sinful. Barth writes:

"Without sin" means that in our human and sinful existence as a man He did not sin. . . . However we may interpret it, the sinlessness of Jesus was not a condition of His being as man, but the human act of His life working itself out in this way from its origin.²

Pannenberg also pointedly asserts that "the victory over sin had not been attained before Jesus' birth, but only in the entire accomplishment of the course of his existence."³

Therefore, it appears to miss the author of Hebrews' point to construe $\chi\rho\iota\varsigma \alpha\mu\alpha\rho\tau\acute{\iota}\alpha\varsigma$ statically, as an innate quality or divine endowment. To respond sinlessly to temptation, to obey God and His will, necessarily involves decision, and without active decision any fidelity to God's will would be ethically meaningless. $\chi\rho\iota\varsigma \alpha\mu\alpha\rho\tau\acute{\iota}\alpha\varsigma$ in Hb. 4:15 denotes no abstract theological status, but the dynamic and active obedience of Jesus throughout a lifetime fraught with human weakness and temptation.⁴

¹Speculative thoughts on an intensified concept of sin--such as the concept of "original sin" or sin as a power which corrupts the thoughts, feelings and desires of men--are probably out of place in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Indeed, Pannenberg, God and Man, p. 356, suggests that no NT statement concerning Jesus' sinlessness goes beyond the basic declaration that Jesus committed no sin. J. Hering, Hebrews, p. 36 n. 22, writes: "When our author speaks of 'hamartia' he means what was later called actual sin. He did not ask himself whether Jesus, who shared human weaknesses, did not 'bear' original sin. Perhaps he would have replied in the affirmative, in order to show how radically Jesus was tempted and was victor over evil." See Michel's special excursus, "Jesus der Versuchte und Sündlose," Hebräer (1975), pp. 211-213.

²Barth, CD, IV.2, p. 92.

³Pannenberg, God and Man, p. 362.

⁴See also the comments of H. L. MacNeill, The Christology of

R. Williamson in his brief article, "Hb 4:15 and the Sinlessness of Jesus,"¹ suggests that it has been too readily assumed that "without sin" in Hb. 4:15 means that Jesus never sinned. For Williamson, the critical question is when Jesus attained the state of sinlessness denoted by the phrase $\chi\omega\rho\acute{\iota}\varsigma \acute{\alpha}\mu\alpha\rho\tau\acute{\iota}\alpha\varsigma$. Williamson contends vigorously that $\chi\omega\rho\acute{\iota}\varsigma \acute{\alpha}\mu\alpha\rho\tau\acute{\iota}\alpha\varsigma$ refers to "the end of a process, not to a permanent condition."² Drawing upon his interpretation of the sacrificial theology of Hebrews and the part Jesus plays in that theology as the self-offering high priest (cf. chap. 5; 7:26f.; 9:14), Williamson concludes that

Jesus achieved sinlessness as his life of growing obedience to the will of God was consummated on the Cross in his supreme act of self-abnegation. That was the point at which temptation, and sin, was totally defeated.³

For Williamson, the primary thrust of "without sin" for Hebrews was that "Jesus is a sinless priest;"⁴ and it was at the moment of his death that Jesus became high priest. Jesus, therefore, was sinless at the end of his life, in his self-offering on the cross--but not before. Williamson alludes favourably to G. W. Buchanan's comment on 4:15 that $\chi\omega\rho\acute{\iota}\varsigma \acute{\alpha}\mu\alpha\rho\tau\acute{\iota}\alpha\varsigma$ may refer solely to the crucifixion, and not to Jesus' entire life.⁵ After alluding to the much-quoted epigram of Gregory Nazianzen, "what God has not assumed, that he has not redeemed,"

the Epistle to the Hebrews (Chicago, 1914), p. 44; Moffatt, Hebrews, p. li; Schrenk, "ἱερός," TDNT, III, p. 280.

¹R. Williamson, "Hb 4:15 and the Sinlessness of Jesus," ET 86 (1974-5), pp. 4-8.

²Williamson, "Hb 4:15," p. 5.

³Ibid.

⁴Williamson, "Hb. 4:15," p. 6.

⁵Ibid. Cf. G. W. Buchanan, Hebrews, p. 130. Buchanan looks particularly to the ritual purity of the OT high priest on the Day of Atonement as the key to interpreting $\chi\omega\rho\acute{\iota}\varsigma \acute{\alpha}\mu\alpha\rho\tau\acute{\iota}\alpha\varsigma$ in Hb. 4:15. By

Williamson indeed asserts the necessity of Jesus having been a sinner prior to the Cross in order that his life could have relevance for man.

If the life of Jesus is to have any relevance, relevance as a life which offers to others the prospect of sin's defeat because it embodies such a defeat within itself, that defeat of sin must have been, it seems to me, within a life wholly like that of other men. Jesus must have been . . . involved with as well as 'separated from sinners' in their experience of sin, a High Priest χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας, yet a High Priest who had to learn obedience and be made perfect the hard way.¹

Now insofar as one may speak of a "state of sinlessness" of the high priest Jesus, his "acquisition of the quality of sinlessness," Williamson may well be correct in locating this "state" at the climactic end of Jesus' life. However, it seems to me doubtful that the fuller statement in Hebrews, πεπειρασμένον δὲ κατὰ πάντα καθ' ὁμοιότητα χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας, refers solely to the Cross. Nor does it appear likely that the author of Hebrews conceived of χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας in terms of a sinless "state." Williamson errs, it seems, in that he values too lightly, if at all, the close connexion of the phrase χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας to πεπειρασμένον δὲ κατὰ πάντα καθ' ὁμοιότητα. This dynamic context of Jesus 'tempted in every way like us' may not be set aside. The phrase χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας reflects upon that dynamic human framework and describes not so much a 'state' of sinlessness as the consistent sinless response of Jesus to temptations which he suffered throughout his life. Therefore, in view of the important immediate context of the phrase "without sin," the entirety of Jesus' life under temptation was at every point along the way "without sin" reaching its climax at the Cross. By his death on the Cross, Jesus did not so much become sinless

analogy the self-offering high priest Jesus also was pure, spotless, without sin, at the time of the once-for-all atoning sacrifice upon the cross. Therefore, for Buchanan and Williamson, Jesus' sacrifice upon the cross was for his own sins as well as those of his people (see esp. 7:26-28 and 9:14). Cf. Buchanan, pp. 81f.

¹Williamson, "Hb 4:15," p. 6.

as complete or consummate his life of obedience. J. Hering says it rather well when he succinctly comments that Jesus' sinlessness turns on his "constantly renewed victory over temptations."¹

4. But the sinlessness or obedience of Jesus cannot be verified. Ultimately, Jesus' perfect obedience or sinlessness can only be perceived, as R. Niebuhr observed, by faith.² Pannenberg concludes that one can only assert Jesus' sinlessness in light of the resurrection.³ Was Jesus actually sinless? This cannot be demonstrated. Perhaps the most we can say is that even given the doctrinal interests of the early church, there is a case to be made for the historical credibility of such an assertion of the early church. This is the argument of J. A. T. Robinson who argues:

These judgments, though made for doctrinal reasons, to present Christ as the perfect sacrifice for sin, could scarcely have been made, let alone sustained, within the lifetime of many who had known Jesus if the facts of history had blatantly contradicted them.⁴

Concluding his discussion on Jesus' sinlessness, E. Brunner writes:

Even if ultimately the verdict "without sin" goes further than anything that can be grasped empirically, and thus carries us into the sphere of faith, yet we know of no situation which could shake the truth of these words: "yet without sin."⁵

Whether or not Jesus sinned is clearly a debatable point, however there can be no doubt that the author of Hebrews believed that Jesus did not sin. Though he does not give any detailed illustrations of this sinless response of Jesus to his temptations, there can be no doubt that he regarded the earthly Jesus as never succumbing to temptation, but constantly obeying the will of God.

¹Hering, Hebrews, p. 36.

²Niebuhr, Nature and Destiny, p. 78.

³Pannenberg, God and Man, pp. 362f.

⁴Robinson, "Perfect?", p. 45

⁵Brunner, Creation and Redemption, p. 324.

IV. High Priestly Help (4:16)

"Therefore" (οὖν), in light of the fact that believers have in Jesus a great high priest who has passed into the very presence of God, and also is one who is able to sympathize with human weaknesses, the author of Hebrews encourages his readers to "approach the throne of grace with confidence" (4:16). Whether θρόνος τῆς χάριτος means the "throne" of God, Christ, or both, that "throne" does not here suggest the theme of judgment nor of lordship--as is predominantly the case in the rest of the NT and Hebrews--, but of grace. Thus, in view of this "throne" as the place of grace, of mercy and help, the summons to "approach with confidence" is well grounded. For in their approach to that "throne of grace" they shall receive ἔλεος καὶ χάριν and find εὐκαιρὸν βοήθειαν. Just as in 2:17-18, Jesus, seen as the tempted brother who is the ἀρχιερεὺς of his people, is the vital link in the provision of "help" for his brethren in their time of need. In this motif of "help," the tendency of the author of Hebrews to press his christology into the service of his paraenesis is evident. And here, again as in 2:17f., the earthly experience of Jesus--specifically of his experience of temptation--plays a crucial role in providing that help.

V. Summary Statements

In this crucial transitional passage (4:14-16) the author of Hebrews turns his full attention to his primary christological theme of Jesus as high priest. At this critical juncture in his argument he makes clear reference to the earthly life of Jesus. His reference to Jesus being "tempted in every way like us" firmly locates Jesus within the human realm. Like mankind, Jesus too struggled and wrestled against the temptations which, arising through human weaknesses that

Jesus also shared, characterize human existence. Notably, as before in 2:17-18, the author refers to the life that Jesus lived, not, just the death that he died. Nor does he merely posit the bare factuality of Jesus' existence as a man, rather he emphasizes "how" Jesus lived.

1. But do the gospel traditions lend any support to the picture Hebrews gives of Jesus' earthly life in 4:15? It must be admitted that when we seek to relate Hebrews' picture of Jesus to that in the gospels, one discovers that there is only the barest point of contact between the two.

That Jesus was tempted and that the sphere of that temptation was his human weaknesses presses the limits of an alignment of Hebrews' description of Jesus' temptations with that of the gospels. As observed above, Hebrews' description of Jesus' temptations-- κατὰ πάντα καθ' ὁμοιότητα--reaches beyond any information available in the gospels. Indeed, Hebrews' understanding of Jesus' temptations is actually quite different even in emphasis from that of the major reference to Jesus' temptation in the gospels, the temptations of the Son of God in the wilderness. Jesus' solidarity with mankind is not the point at issue in the gospels where there is reference to Jesus' temptation, as is emphatically the case in Hb. 4:15 (also 2:18). The rather general nature of Hebrews' reference to Jesus' temptation also precludes any meaningful comparison with specific gospel references. Little therefore can be gained through a comparison of Hebrews with the gospel traditions.

Yet, there is a certain degree of harmony between Hebrews and the gospels with regard to Jesus' temptation. Both, for instance, connect Jesus' temptation with suffering (cf. 2:18); and in both Jesus' temptation ultimately points to his obedience, his response to temptation. Nevertheless, it remains true that there exists a significant

difference in emphasis between Hebrews and the synoptics.

2. Reference to Jesus' earthly life, a life in which he as a man experienced temptations, was absolutely indispensable for Hebrews' christology.

(i) At 4:14-16 the author turns his full attention to Jesus as high priest. Since a high priest must be one with those he must represent before God, the oneness of Jesus with his people is precisely the point at issue in stressing Jesus' temptations. As a priest, Jesus must be wholly within the life situation of his people, not isolated from them, but, like the OT high priest, united with them at the most basic level of their human existence. Therefore, unless Jesus knew from within the sphere of the flesh the human weaknesses which bedeviled his brethren, he could in no way sympathize with them. But precisely at this point Hebrews emphatically asserts Jesus' ability to sympathize, an ability gained and proven by his authentic experience of temptations in every way like his people's. In Hebrews, Jesus' temptations prepare and qualify him for the high priesthood. If there had been no experience of temptation, there could have been no real sympathy; no sympathy, no high priesthood; no high priesthood, no access to the mercy and grace of God, nor to the urgently needed help in maintaining their Christian confession. In Hebrews, Jesus' earthly life was no mere incidental note, nor was it simply illustrative material. Rather, his earthly life, a life under temptation, served the absolutely essential function of establishing his credentials as a true high priest, touched with the feeling of human weaknesses and therefore able to intercede and help. To be sure, the author also envisions the exalted great high priest Jesus in 4:14-16, but it is clear here that the indispensable foundation of Jesus' high priesthood was his earthly life. Already in his first mention of Jesus as high priest,

the author indicated the priority of Jesus' earthly life for his understanding of Jesus' high priesthood (2:17). In order to be a "merciful and faithful high priest" Jesus had to be made like his brethren in every respect.

The author of Hebrews also directs his readers' attention to the continuing reality of Jesus' oneness with them. His sympathy is not bound to the past--though it has its origination there--but continues even now. The exalted great high priest Christians now have (ἔχουμεν 4:15) remains the one who sympathizes and the one who was tempted, Jesus. Thus Hebrews affirms the continuity of the earthly Jesus with the heavenly high priest who has penetrated through the heavens to the presence of God Himself. As exalted high priest Jesus has not jettisoned his manhood and the reality of his human existence, but has kept it. Thus, he remains near to man and able to help in time of need.

(ii) But a problematic question yet remains; how does Hebrews understand the relationship between Christ and his people? As has been frequently said, Hebrews' picture of Jesus as the tempted and sympathetic high priest firmly establishes Jesus' solidarity and continuity with mankind. Yet the statement that Jesus was *χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας* distinguishes Jesus from a mankind characterized by sinning. For Jesus to respond sinlessly to temptation is a definite point of distinction from and discontinuity with a decidedly sinful mankind. John Knox discusses this dialectic of Jesus' continuity and discontinuity with mankind under the heading "the poignant dilemma."¹ Knox notes with amazement how both Paul and the author of Hebrews maintain the "normality" of Jesus' earthly life. Yet, precisely at the same point--the point of

¹Knox, Humanity and Divinity, pp. 34-51.

Jesus' relation to sin--both Paul and Hebrews draw back from saying and fully meaning that Jesus was "like his brethren in every respect."

Knox holds that Hb. 4:15 comes close to permitting an understanding of Jesus participating in our human sinfulness. He asks:

Can we, then, think of Jesus as tempted--and moreover tempted in all respects as we are--and yet as not knowing from within the existential meaning of human sinfulness? I am not now saying that we cannot; I am saying that there is no obvious way in which we can.¹

Can the tension between Jesus' authentic humanity and his sinlessness be resolved? What of Hebrews in particular? Knox, and similarly R. Williamson, suggest that "without sin" in 4:15 likely refers only to the final act of obedience to God on the cross, and that the logic of Hebrews' argument requires that Jesus should have shared completely in our human lot--without any reservation at all, even this one. K. Barth, on the other hand, resolves the tension by asserting that Jesus assumed our sinful flesh, existing within our state and condition, but not doing what we in that state and condition continually do. For Barth, "the commission of sin as such is not an attribute of true human existence as such, whether from the standpoint of its creation by God or from that of the fact that it is flesh on account of the Fall."² But, as Knox noted, the line between sin and temptation is a fine one and perhaps not so easily drawn.³ C. F. D. Moule also wrestles with the paradox of continuity and discontinuity regarding Jesus' relationship to his brethren. Moule looks for a solution in the "steady and undeviating 'set' of the will's current"--filial loyalty or obedience to God.

¹Ibid, p. 47.

²Barth, CD, IV.2, p. 156.

³Knox, Humanity and Divinity, pp. 46f.

In a desperately long battle, a soldier may yearn with every muscle in his weary body to gain the relief of desertion; but it is possible for him, at the same time, never to deviate a hair's breadth from the steady 'set' of the current of his loyalty to his country or his cause. Physically--even mentally--he may consent to the relief he longs for; but the 'set' of his will remains constant in its direction. In another context, and by way of another example, one might say that this 'set' of the will will negate what might otherwise have been 'looking lustfully on a woman' (Matt. v.28).

So, perhaps, it may be with the humanity of Jesus. He is involved in all the circumstances of normal humanity: whether by heredity or not, at least by reason of belonging to a sinful society, he is involved in extreme temptations to 'desert.' He is involved in circumstances where to choose any course is necessarily to do harm to somebody (for instance, by breaking his mother's heart or precipitating the downfall of a disciple). But that does not necessarily mean (does it?) that the 'set' of his loyalty was not undeviatingly in the direction of God's will, nor that he could not make, with absolute perfection, the right response to those particular circumstances.¹

Here in Hebrews one is, as Knox noted, faced with a paradox regarding Jesus' relationship to his brethren--a "poignant dilemma." How could Christ have saved us if he was not a human being like ourselves? How could a human being like ourselves have saved us? To say that Jesus indeed did sin, as some feel the logic of Hebrews demands, appears still to me to contradict the likely meaning of the statement $\chi\omega\rho\iota\varsigma\ \alpha\mu\alpha\rho\tau\acute{\iota}\alpha\varsigma$. But the attempts of such as Barth and Moule to resolve the dilemma leave unaffected the fundamental difference of Jesus from his brethren--he did not, like them, sin. Thus, for Hebrews there remains this characteristic dialectical understanding of the relationship between Jesus and his people. Though one with his people, he is yet distinct from them at this crucial point. This brief statement in Hb. 4:15 states in perhaps the most acute way in the NT the paradoxical relationship of Jesus to his people--similar to them at their most humiliated level, and yet unmistakably different.

¹Moule, "Manhood of Jesus," p. 106.

3. As is true throughout Hebrews, christology is bent to the service of paraenesis. This is no less true here at Hb. 4:14-16. Because of the kind of high priest they have in Jesus, Hebrews' readers must realize with a renewed sense of urgency the vital necessity of maintaining their Christian confession. Because in Jesus they have an ἀρχιερεὺς μέγας in the very presence of God, their confidence of needed help and hope is revived, and their determination to press on their Christian faith is revitalized. But as has been often noted, the author of Hebrews bases his representation of the high priesthood of Jesus on his understanding of the kind of man that Jesus was. Thus, Jesus' earthly life, a life lived under temptation in the sphere of the weak flesh, was at the foundation of his paraenetic exhortation. It provided for Hebrews' readers the means whereby they could maintain the vitality of their confession of faith in the face of temptation.

Chapter 4

JESUS' PRAYER AND PASSION IN HEBREWS 5:7-8

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I. Introduction

No passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews has generated so much comment and dispute among biblical critics as Hb. 5:7f. This intense critical interest has no doubt been engendered both by the unquestionable significance of this passage for the presentation and development of the author's christology and by the acutely felt problems for interpretation of this passage. Understandably then, the literature on this passage is extensive and the lines of investigation are correspondingly diverse.¹

¹See the appropriate sections in all the commentaries. See also the following works: P. Andriessen, "Angoisse de la mort dans l'Épître aux Hébreux," NovRevTheol 96 (1974), pp. 282-292; P. Andriessen and A. Lenglet, "Quelques passages difficiles de l'Épître aux Hébreux," Bibl 51 (1970), pp. 207-220 (note esp. 208-212 on Hb. 5:7-10); H. W. Attridge, "Heard Because of His Reverence (Heb. 5:7)," JBL 98 (1979), pp. 90-93; T. Boman, "Der Gebetskampf Jesu," NTS 10 (1963-64), pp. 261-73; E. Brandenburger, "Text und Vorlagen von Hebr. 5:7-10: Ein Beitrag zur Christologie des Hebräerbriefs," NovT 11 (1969), pp. 190-224; G. Braumann, "Hebr. 5:7-10," ZNW 51 (1960), pp. 278-280; A. Feuillet, "L'évocation de l'agonie de Gethsemani dans l'Épître aux Hébreux (5:7-8)," Esp'rit et Vie 86 (1976), pp. 49-53; G. Friedrich, "Das Lied vom Hohenpriester im Zusammenhang von Hebr. 4:14-5:10," TZ 18 (1962), pp. 95-115; E. Grässer, "Der historische Jesus in Hebräerbrief," ZNW (1965), pp. 63-91 (esp. pp. 76-82 on Hb. 5:7-8); J. Jeremias, "Hebr. 5:7-10," ZNW 44 (1952-53), pp. 107-111; T. Lescow, "Jesus in Gethsemane bei Lukas und im Hebräerbrief," ZNW 58 (1967), pp. 215-39; N. R. Lightfoot, "The Saving of the Savior: Hebrews 5:7ff.," Restoration Quarterly 16 (1973), pp. 166-173; O. Linton, "Hebräerbrevet och den historiske Jesus," SvenskTheolKv 26 (1960), pp. 335-345; W. R. G. Loader, Sohn und Hohepriester: Eine traditionsge-schichtliche Untersuchung zur Christologie des Hebräerbriefes, Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament 53 (Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1981), esp. pp. 81-141; F. Laub, Bekenntnis und Auslegung: Die paränetische Funktion der Christologie im Hebräerbrief, Biblische Untersuchungen 15 (Regensburg, 1980), esp. pp. 104-143;

However our particular interest here in Hb. 5:7f. is the commonly acknowledged allusion to the earthly life of Jesus. Indeed, this feature of Hb. 5:7f. has elicited response from virtually every biblical critic confronting this passage. For example, J. Moffatt comments:

It is one of the passages which prove how deeply the writer was impressed by the historical Jesus; the intense faith and courage and pitifulness of Jesus must have deeply moved his mind. . . . No theoretical reflection on the qualification of priests or upon the dogma of messiah's sinlessness could have produced such passages as this.¹

While others might dispute Moffatt's sentiment here, virtually all feel it especially necessary to come to grips with the author's reference to Jesus' earthly life here. In the following study, therefore, we shall focus attention on those specific aspects of this passage which help to understand the nature and significance of Jesus' earthly life for the author of Hebrews.²

II. Contextual Considerations

Already in 2:17f. the author described Jesus as the ἐλεήμων καὶ πιστὸς ἀρχιερεὺς τὰ πρὸς τὸν θεόν . Thus the author announced

C. Maurer, "'Erhört wegen der Gottesfurcht,' Hebr. 5:7," in Neues Testament und Geschichte: Historisches Geschehen und Deutung im Neuen Testament, ed. H. Baltensweiler and Bo Reicke, Oscar Cullmann zum 70 Geburtstag (Tübingen, 1972), pp. 275-84; R. Omark, "The Saving of the Savior: Exegesis and Christology in Hebrews 5:7-10," Int 12 (1958), pp. 39-51; M. Rissi, "Die Menschlichkeit Jesu nach Heb. 5:7-8," TZ 11 (1955), pp. 28-45; G. Schille, "Erwägungen zur Hohepriesterlehre des Hebräerbriefes," ZNW 46 (1955), pp. 81-109; A. Strobel, "Die Psalmen-grundlage der Gethsemane-Parallele Hebr. 5:7ff.," ZNW 45 (1954), pp. 252-266; J. Thurén, "Gebet und Gehorsam des Erniedrigten (Heb. 5:7-10 noch einmal)," NovT 13 (1971), pp. 136-146; H. T. Wrege, "Jesusgeschichte und Jüngergeschick nach Joh 12:20-33 und Hebr 5:7-10," in Der Ruf Jesu und die Antwort der Gemeinde, ed. E. Lohse, Festschrift für J. Jeremias (Göttingen, 1970), pp. 259-288.

¹J. Moffatt, Hebrews, p. 65.

²Since Jesus' high priesthood is at the heart of Hebrews' christology, the allusion to Jesus' earthly life in a comparison of Jesus' priesthood with that of the OT high priest demands the closest attention.

the most prominent christological theme of his letter in anticipatory fashion¹--Jesus, our great high priest. Hb. 4:14-5:10 elaborates further on aspects of this theme, especially upon the central place Jesus' humanity holds in his ministry as high priest (2:17-18).²

After an interlude in 3:1-4:13³ the author returns in 4:14ff. to the high priest theme announced in 2:17. In this introductory section (4:14-16) the author is, as frequently elsewhere, intent on exhortation, summoning and encouraging his readers to hold fast their confession (4:14) and boldly to approach the throne of grace for help (4:16). He bases his word of exhortation upon the fact that they have in Jesus an ἀρχιερεὺς μέγας who is present in the true sanctuary in God's very presence (διεληλυθότα τοὺς οὐρανοὺς) and who, as his experience of temptations proves, can sympathize (συμπαθεῖν) with human weaknesses.⁴ In 5:1-10 then the author elaborates further on this basis for his exhortation,⁵ thus expanding the scope of the

¹J. Swetnam holds that 2:17f. serves as an "announcement of a theme," one of three formal literary principles around which Swetnam organizes the literary structure of Hebrews ("genre" and "length" are the other two principles). Hb. 2:17f. announces the theme of Christ as "merciful and faithful High Priest," a theme which the author of Hebrews then elaborates paraenetically in 3:1-6:20 (3:1-4:30 examines Christ's faithfulness based on his divinity; 4:14-6:20 examines Christ's mercy based on his humanity). Whether the author of Hebrews conceived of his task in this way is of course debatable, though it is certainly true that in 2:17f Christ is introduced as "merciful and faithful High Priest" with an eye to the following exposition of that theme. See J. Swetnam, "Form and Content in Hebrews 1-6," Bibl 53 (1972), pp. 368-385; also Swetnam, "Form and Content in Hebrews 7-13," Bibl 55 (1974), pp. 333-348.

²Hb. 2:17-18 stresses the necessity of Jesus' full humanity for his high priesthood. Hb. 2:18 underlines the suffering and temptation of Jesus in this connexion. These same motifs recur in 4:14-5:10.

³In 3:1 the author of Hebrews refers to Jesus as the "high Priest of our confession," yet does not in the following deal explicitly with Jesus' high priesthood.

⁴See comments in previous chapter on 4:15.

⁵O. Michel, Hebräer (1975), p. 215.

theme--Jesus, our great high priest.

For the first time the author in 5:1-10 explicitly utilizes the analogy of Jesus' high priesthood with that of the OT Aaronic high priest.¹ The chiastic structure of this passage is commonly acknowledged,² though the precise identification and relationship of the elements within the chiasm is disputed by some.³ Yet, the basic structure and sense seems clear enough. 5:1-4 gives the essential requirements for the OT priests: (1) He must, in order to be able to offer sacrifices for his people's sins, be a man and be able to sympathize with their weaknesses (vv.1-3); (b) He must obtain his priestly office not through self-appointment, but through divine appointment (v.4). Hb. 5:5-10 demonstrates Jesus' correspondence to this OT norm (οὕτως καὶ ὁ Χριστός , v.5), taking the above points in inverse order: (b) Jesus was called by God (vv.5-6; Ps. 2:7; 110:4); (a) He was a man, able therefore to sympathize with and represent his

¹The analogy is however suggested earlier in 4:14 by the designation of Jesus as the great high priest (ἀρχιερεὺς μέγας).

²F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, pp. 94f.; Brandenburger, "Text und Vorlagen," pp. 221f.; Friedrich, "Das Lied," pp. 95ff.; Lescow, "Gethsemane," pp. 224f.; Michel, Hebräer (1975), pp. 214f.; F. Delitzsch, Hebrews I, pp. 225ff.; Rissi, "Menschlichkeit," pp. 36ff.; et al.

³M. Dibelius discerned seven characteristics of the OT high priest in Hb. 5:1-4 and identifies a corresponding seven in 5:5-10 in reference to Jesus (Botschaft und Geschichte II (Tübingen, 1956), pp. 169-172). Friedrich, "Das Lied," pp. 95-97, rightly draws attention to the many places where Dibelius' parallels break down. H. Montefiore, Hebrews, pp. 93-96, sees three qualifications for the office of high priest. More likely though is the simpler understanding of O. Michel, Hebräer (1975), pp. 214f., who views 5:1-3 and 7-10 as dealing with the high priest's experience of human weaknesses and hence his ability to sympathize with his people; 5:4 and 5:5-6 then deal with the issue of divine calling. Cf. F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 88; E. Grässer, "Jesus," p. 77; Moffatt, Hebrews, pp. 61f.; Hewitt, Hebrews, pp. 95f.; Rissi, "Menschlichkeit," p. 36; also on the literary structure of 5:1-10 see A. Vanhoye, La Structure littéraire de l'épître aux Hébreux (Paris and Brussels, 1963), pp. 105-113).

people (vv.7-10).¹ The basic thrust of the passage seems plain: Jesus indeed possesses the recognized qualifications of a high priest. His priesthood and ministry is therefore legitimized.

Nevertheless, as G. Friedrich and others² correctly maintain, Hb. 5:1-10 presents no exact 1:1 correspondence between the OT high priest and Jesus the high priest. Friedrich writes that, ". . . bei 5,1-4 und 5,5-10 handelt es sich keineswegs um zwei parallele Gedankengänge. . . , von denen der zweite den ersten aus Schrift und Geschichte belegt."³ We may justly draw attention to points of contrast as well. (a) Jesus' priesthood is after the order of Melchizedek (vv. 6, 10).⁴ (b) No parallel exists between Jesus and the OT high priest regarding the latter's sacrifice for his own sins (v.3). (c) Jesus' priesthood is forever (εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα , v.6). It is clear from these few examples that there is both parallel and antithesis in this analogy.

However, we must direct our attention to vv.7f. where the author looks to the earthly life of Jesus. But before we turn in

¹A number of scholars consider it likely that vv.5-10 correspond only to the idea of divine appointment (v.4), not that of Jesus' humanity/sympathy (vv.1-3). See A. S. Peake, Hebrews, p. 132; A. B. Davidson, Hebrews, p. 110; Lünemann, Hebrews, pp. 200f.; G. Friedrich, "Das Lied," pp. 98, 113f.; Jeremias, "Hebr. 5:7-10," p. 110; H. L. MacNeill, Christology of Hebrews, p. 22. This, however, seems to value too lightly the connexion between Jesus' obedience under suffering and temptation (cf. 4:15) and his ability to sympathize with his people who are experiencing suffering and temptation.

²"Das Lied," p. 98; cf. Loader, Sohn und Hohepriester, p. 98; Maurer, "Gottesfurcht," pp. 280f.; Thuren, "Gebet und Gehorsam," p. 137.

³"Das Lied," p. 98.

⁴In ch. 7 the author of Hebrews examines this issue of Jesus' Melchizedekian high priesthood at length.

more detail to the words and phrases of this passage we take brief note of the sentence structure in vv.7-10. The sentence structure of vv.7-10 is somewhat difficult, though its elaborate nature is characteristic of the author.¹ The rather abrupt ὅς probably refers back to ὁ Χριστός (v.5a; αὐτόν, v.5b).² Its very abruptness--perhaps by design--may conceivably serve to underline the shift now to the second member in the second part of the chiasm. From the relative ὅς the author erects two parallel statements (καί) on the two finite verbs (ἔμαθεν, v.8; ἐγένετο, v.9). Various clauses are attached to each main verb. The first statement (vv.7f.), with which we shall most concern ourselves, consists of three participial clauses following each other (προσενέγκας . . . εἰσακουσθεῖς . . . ὡν), a major statement (ἔμαθεν . . . τὴν ὑπακοήν) and a relative clause (ἀφ' ὧν ἔπαθεν). We turn then to this first chief statement.

III. Exegetical Considerations

We have organized our exegesis around the two prominent motifs which the author presents from the life of Jesus: (a) Jesus' struggle in prayer, and (b) his 'being-obedient' in suffering.

A. The Prayer of Jesus

1. Setting. The striking phrase ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ supplies a reference point in time for what follows,

¹Cf. Hb. 1:1-4; 2:2-4.

²There appears to be no other possible antecedent in the passage (Westcott, Hebrews, p. 124; Lünemann, Hebrews, p. 203; R. Deichgräber, Gottes hymnus und Christushymnus in der frühen Christenheit, Studien zur Umwelt des NT 5 (Göttingen, 1967), p. 174). Friedrich, "Das Lied," p. 99, refers the relative pronoun back to the original hymnic opening. Brandenburger, "Text und Vorlagen," p. 210, refers to the relative pronoun as a "Nahtstelle" (sectional boundary).

namely the earthly life of the Son Jesus.¹ The use of σάρξ here may suggest Jesus' sharing of the weaknesses corresponding to human 'fleshly' existence (cf. 2:14ff.; 4:15),² thus making the following remarks about Jesus particularly relevant to readers suffering under temptations and trials as a result of their human weaknesses.³

2. Content. We turn now to the author's description of Jesus' prayer itself in the first participial clause. The participial phrase used here for Jesus' offering up of prayers and supplications, δεήσεις τε καὶ ἱκετηρίας . . . προσενέγκας, is best understood not as a cultic terminus technicus corresponding to the sacrifices offered by the OT high priest for his own sins (5:2-3),⁴ but more simply as

¹O. Michel, Hebräer (1975), pp. 219f., calls this phrase an "Umschreibung seiner geschichtlichen Existenz" and gives several biblical examples of the use of ἡμέρα referring to a person's lifetime (Gen. 9:29; 10:25; 35:28; Deut. 30:20; Lk. 1:7). Cf. Grässer, "Jesus," p. 78. Friedrich, "Das Lied," p. 107, suggests that this is an explanatory note of the author to make it clear that he is now speaking about the earthly Jesus and not the priest in eternity.

²The close connexion of Jesus' complete humanity with his sharing of man's weaknesses (ἀσθενεῖαι) is most clearly seen in 4:15 (cf. 2:14f.; 5:2; See M. Rissi, "Menschlichkeit," p. 37; F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 98; Montefiore, Hebrews, p. 97).

³The paraenetic concerns of the author of Hebrews are served throughout this passage (4:14-5:10) by this paralleling of Jesus and his human brethren with regard to human weaknesses and the accompanying temptations and suffering.

⁴Those who assert a cultic context for δεήσεις τε καὶ ἱκετηρίας προσενέγκας see here a correspondence with the OT high priest's offerings (5:1-3 προσφέρη δῶρά τε καὶ θυσίας . . . καὶ περὶ αὐτοῦ προσφέρειν περὶ ἁμαρτιῶν. . .). See M. Rissi, "Menschlichkeit," p. 37; Thureñ, "Gebet und Gehorsam," p. 138; Montefiore, Hebrews, p. 97; Maurer, "Gottesfurcht," p. 280. But if a cultic sense were intended προσφέρω would have taken the dative, as in Hb. 9:14; 11:4. Here, however, προσφέρω has the accusative instead. In Hb. 5:7 Jesus' prayer is for himself (αὐτόν; there is no idea of Jesus' prayer here being intercessory, as Rissi supposes), but the idea that Jesus offered up sacrifices for his own sins is completely foreign to Hebrews (cf. 4:15; 7:26f.; see Friedrich, "Das Lied," pp. 96f.; Michel, Hebräer (1975), p. 220 n.3; Loader, Sohn und Hohepriester, p. 105 n. 54; Moffatt, Hebrews, pp. 64f.; F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 98 n. 43; Davidson, Hebrews, p. 113 n. 1).

the language of intense prayerful entreaty by a man in need of help from God.¹

But what was the burden of Jesus' prayer, its content? Though we are not told directly, it is commonly acknowledged that τὸν δυνάμενον σῶζειν αὐτὸν ἐκ θανάτου did not function merely as a paraphrase for God,² but more significantly suggested the content of Jesus' petition to God. Therefore, much attention and dispute has accompanied the question concerning the precise sense of the words σῶζειν αὐτὸν ἐκ θανάτου. Diverse interpretations of these words exist,³ although two options tend to dominate the field of scholarly opinion: (a) deliverance from impending physical suffering and death,⁴ and (b) deliverance out of death, out of the domain of death

¹The double substantive δεήσεις τε καὶ ἱκετηρίας draws attention to the suppliant posture of the one offering up the prayer. Cf. Job 40:22LXX; also Philo, De Cherub 47. Rissi, "Menschlichkeit," p. 37, notes that "die Verbindung beider Substantive . . . betont die Dringlichkeit des Gebets und die Intensität der Gebetsleidenschaft" (cf. Westcott, Hebrews, p. 125; Michel, Hebräer (1975), p. 220 n.2; Moffatt, Hebrews, p. 65; Montefiore, Hebrews, p. 97; Spicq, Hébreux II, pp. 112f.)

²See 1 Sam. 2:6; H. Windisch, Hebräerbrief, p. 43; Jeremias, "Hebr. 5:7-10," pp. 108f.; F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 100 n. 50; Loader, Sohn und Hohepriester, p. 100.

³A unique, though unconvincing, interpretation is offered by Hewitt, Hebrews, pp. 99f. (Cf. A. F. Stauffer, ET 6 (1894-95), pp. 433ff.) Hewitt supposes that Jesus prayed that he would escape an untimely death in Gethsemane, not the death on the cross. Therefore, the problem of Jesus' prayer "being-heard" is solved neatly, since Jesus did leave Gethsemane alive. If an allusion to Gethsemane is accepted, then it is difficult to see how the reference to the "cup" and the "hour" could be anything other than the death on the cross (see F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 99 n. 45; P. E. Hughes, Hebrews, pp. 185f.) R. C. H. Lenski, Hebrews and James (Minneapolis, 1966), pp. 163f., argues that "not my will but thine be done" (Mk. 14:36; Mtt. 26:39, 42; Lk. 22:42) was the heart of Jesus' Gethsemane prayer. Indeed, such a prayer was "heard." However, the concept of Jesus' submission to God's will only comes in in the controversial phrase ἀπὸ τῆς εὐλαβείας, a phrase which there indicates the reason for Jesus' prayer being heard, not the content of the prayer.

⁴See F. Delitzsch, Hebrews I, p. 242; A. S. Peake, Hebrews, pp. 134f.; Montefiore, Hebrews, p. 98; Lescow, "Gethsemane," p. 227;

(i.e., resurrection or exaltation).¹ On its own ἐκ θανάτου is ambiguous.² Both major interpretations are possible and both can supply an acceptable sense to the passage. This very ambiguity

Strobel, "Psalmengrundlage," pp. 259f.; Omark, "Savior," pp. 41ff.; Lightfoot, "Savior," pp. 169-72; E. Grässer, "Der Hebräerbrief, 1938-63," ThR 30 (1964-65), p. 200. R. Bultmann, "εὐλαβής," TDNT II, pp. 752ff.; and H. Windisch, Hebräerbrief, p. 43, both accept A. von Harnack's conjecture of an οὐκ prior to εἰσακουσθεῖς in Hb. 5:7 ("Zwei alte dogmatische Korrekturen im Hebräerbrief," Studien zur Geschichte des Neuen Testaments und der alten Kirche I (Berlin, 1931), pp. 234-252 (esp. 245ff.)); see below pp. 139ff. That Jesus prayed that he might be spared the horrific suffering and death of the cross is, exponents of this position assert, the most natural understanding of his prayer. As well, it is consistent with the context of the argument of Hebrews, it is argued, that the fully human high priest Jesus should feel, like all men, a dread of death (2:14) and seek escape from it. Indeed, it is argued, a prayer for exaltation or resurrection would render the Gethsemane prayer "not my will but thine be done" almost meaningless.

¹See Jeremias, "Hebr. 5:7-10," pp. 109f.; Friedrich, "Das Lied," pp. 104f.; Braumann, "Hebr. 5:7-10," p. 278; P. E. Hughes, Hebrews, pp. 183f.; Lünemann, Hebrews, p. 206; Brandenburger, "Text und Vorlagen," p. 217; Loader, Sohn und Hohepriester, pp. 99f. Jeremias and others similarly key on the following participle εἰσακουσθεῖς which indicates the granting of Jesus' prayer request. This "being-heard," they assert, refers to Jesus' exaltation or resurrection. Therefore it follows that Jesus' prayer corresponded to its answer. Jeremias especially looks to the Johannine version of Jesus' Gethsemane prayer (Jn. 12:27f.) as correlating most closely in terms of content with Hb. 5:7 (p. 109). "Besonders Joh 12:27f ist wichtig, weil hier (in Übereinstimmung mit Mc 14:36) die Bitte um Errettung vor dem Tode ausdrücklich widerrufen und (über Mc 14:36 hinaus) durch die Bitte ersetzt wird: πάντες, δόξασόν σου τὸ ὄνομα. Diese Auffassung der Gethsemanebitte liegt auch, wie das εἰσακουσθεῖς zeigt, Hebr. 5:7 vor. Gegenstand der Bitte Jesu ist also seine Erhöhung." In further defending this general position, Loader appeals to other passages in Hebrews for support. "In 13:20 ist es gerade der Todesbereich, aus dem Jesus gerettet wurde. In 2,14f wird von dem gesprochen, der die Macht des Todes hat, und gesagt, dass, weil Jesus ihn überwunden hat, die Christen keine Angst mehr zu haben brauchen. Aber das bedeutet keineswegs, dass sie nicht sterben werden. Es ist nicht das Sterben selbst, vor dem man Angst hatte, sondern das Bleiben im Todesbereich" (pp. 100f.). For this position much hangs upon the inference back from the participle εἰσακουσθεῖς. Any credible understanding of εἰσακουσθεῖς while at the same time holding to position (a) would gravely weaken this argument.

²Westcott, Hebrews, p. 126, holds that the prepositional phrase ἐκ θανάτου covers both the ideas mentioned above, ~~in notes~~

therefore must preclude any dogmatism on this point. Clearly much depends on how one understands the context and background of this passage, though even this may bring us no closer to a definite answer.¹ Nevertheless, this much seems clear. The author of Hebrews has envisioned for his readers the man Jesus at prayer, a prayer in which Jesus places himself humbly before God as a needy and dependent supplicant. Cognizant of the prospect of his own death in the near future, Jesus pleaded with God for "deliverance from death" (σῶζειν ἐκ θανάτου).

3. Manner. Furthermore the author of Hebrews includes a description of the manner in which Jesus offered up the prayers and supplications-- μετὰ κραυγῆς ἰσχυρᾶς καὶ δακρύων . The horrifying prospect of death facing Jesus brought forth a particularly anguished entreaty from Jesus, passionately pleading to God "with strong crying and tears."² R. Williamson rightly points out that the κραυγή here in Hb. 5:7 is not paralleled with δέησεις τε καὶ ἱκετηρίας as if κραυγή made reference to the prayer itself (a "cry of entreaty"), but rather refers to a "cry" of physical pain and anguish which accompanied the prayer.³ Thus, with this phrase the author vividly depicts the passion of Jesus in prayer, a detail which strikingly emphasizes the full reality of Jesus' frail humanity.

¹See below pp. 142ff.

²The question of the source for this description of Jesus in prayer is hotly debated.

³R. Williamson, Philo and Hebrews, p. 62 n. 1. Disagreeing with those who see Philonic parallels to Hb. 5:7 here (e.g., C. Spicq), Williamson notes the difference between κραυγῆς ἰσχυρᾶς in Hb. 5:7 and the Philonic ἐκβοήσεις (Quod det. 92, 93; Leg. All. III.213). The nature of the "cry" is different, κραυγή being a cry of physical pain and anguish while ἐκβοήσεις is a cry of entreaty and appeal to God.

The great object of the writer is to describe the agony of Jesus in its full intensity. That is the depth of his humiliation. These are not "prayers" such as we read of at other times but literal beggings as well as pitiful pleadings of the man Christ Jesus in his utter dependence on God. Here there is all the weakness of the lowly flesh, the humble human nature which he bore, which accompanied his begging and pleading with (μετό) agonized crying and unrestrained tears.¹

No room exists here then for any docetic conception of Jesus, rather the author confronts his readers with the "naked grim reality"² of Jesus' genuine humanity.³

4. Divine Response. In another participial clause the author now goes on to indicate the response to Jesus' impassioned appeal, εἰσακουσθεῖς ἀπὸ τῆς εὐλαβείας . This phrase has been and continues to be vigorously debated. Difficulties arise at three points in particular: (a) the difficulty in saying that Jesus' prayer was "heard" (what form did the answer take?), (b) the ambiguity of the preposition ἀπὸ , and (c) the ambiguity of the noun εὐλαβεία .

Generally, εὐλαβεία meant a 'careful regard' or 'caution,' though this basic sense may be construed equally well either as 'fear' in the sense of anxiety or 'godly fear' in the sense of reverent awe.⁴ Both classical writings and the LXX reflect this double sense,⁵ although the only two NT writers who use this word group (Luke and Hebrews) consistently adopt the latter sense, that of 'godly fear' or a

¹Lenski, Hebrews, p. 162.

²A. B. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 184.

³See Michel, Hebräer (1975), p. 221; MacNeill, Christology, p. 22; Lenski, Hebrews, p. 162; Spicq, Hébreux II, p. 113.

⁴W. Bauer, Greek-English Lexicon, p. 322. R. Bultmann, "εὐλαβής," TDNT II, ed. G. Kittel, trans. G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, 1964), pp. 751-754.

⁵Ibid. Bultmann and Bauer adduce numerous examples of the double sense of this word-group. This double sense is likewise reflected in Josephus and Philo (Bultmann, pp. 752f.).

reverential attitude toward God.¹ In Luke-Acts the author repeatedly uses the adjective εὐλαβής in this way, designating certain men as 'devout' (RSV, Lk. 2:25; Acts 2:5; 8:2; 22:12).² In Hb. 11:7 the author uses the passive verb εὐλαβηθεῖς to indicate the reverence (and consequent obedience) of Noah in reference to God's warning of the flood.³ But most significantly, the only other place the noun εὐλαβεῖα is used, Hb. 12:28, it clearly connotes 'godly fear,' the reverence and awe with which one offers acceptable worship unto God.⁴ This strongly suggests a like meaning in Hb. 5:7 for εὐλαβεῖα. The Vulgate and the early Greek exegetes also support this interpretation of εὐλαβεῖα in Hb. 5:7.⁵ Therefore it is likely that εὐλαβεῖα here signifies Jesus' personal attitude of careful regard in his relations with God--his fear of God.⁶

¹Lk. 2:25; Acts 2:5; 8:2; 22:12; Hb. 5:7; 11:7; 12:28.

²The LXX uses εὐλαβής only in this sense of a scrupulous observance of the Law (Lev. 15:31; Mic. 7:2; Sir. 11:17). This attitude of extreme care with regard to the Law is seen clearly in Acts 22:12 where Ananias is called an ἄνθρωπος εὐλαβὴς κατὰ τὸν νόμον.

³The Jerusalem Bible translates Hb. 11:7, Noah "felt a holy fear and built an ark to save his family."

⁴G. Schrenk, "ἱερός," TDNT III, ed. G. Kittel, trans. G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, 1965), p. 280 n. 63, sees the sense "reverent fear" in 12:28 as the decisive point for taking εὐλαβεῖα as "godly fear" in 5:7. P. E. Hughes, Hebrews, p. 185, notes the parallel between Hb. 12:28 and 5:7; the exhortation in 12:28 to "offer God acceptable worship" corresponds with the offering up of prayers and supplications which God hears (5:7). Both refer to the suppliant's attitude of "godly fear" or "reverential awe." Further, in the parallel of Hb. 12:28 μετὰ εὐλαβείας καὶ δέους with Phil. 2:12 μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου it is clear that both sets of expression are in reference to God, therefore indicating a "godly fear" or "holy awe" (see Maurer, "Gottesfurcht," pp. 276-277; Bultmann, "εὐλαβής," p. 753).

⁵The Vulgate renders the prepositional phrase as pro sua reverentia. See also J. Chrysostom, Homilies on Hebrews, pp. 103f.

⁶G. Friedrich, "Das Lied," pp. 106, 109, rightly draws attention to the close relationship between Jesus' "godly fear" (εὐλαβεῖα) and his "obedience" (ὑπακοή). Indeed, the movement is natural from

Correspondingly, the preposition ἀπό must then be taken in a causal sense, 'because of' or 'on the basis of,' rather than in a separation sense.¹ Hence, the translation "because of his godly fear," though disputed,² provides the most likely under-

v.7 to v.8 in that Jesus' "godly fear" is enacted ("learned") in his "obedience." Friedrich writes: "Jesus würde aber erhört, weil er sich in Gottesfurcht dem Willen Gottes unterordnete und auch in Ergenbenheit den Weg ging, den Gott ihm gewiesen hat. Indem er sich in den Stunden der grossen Anfechtung und Not an den wendet, von dem alles abhängt, zeigt er seine εὐλαβεία, d.h. sein Vertrauen, das zum Gehorchen bereit ist" (p. 106; cf. p. 109). Michel, Hebräer (1975), p. 222, echoes these words and adds that "εὐλαβεία kennzeichnet vielleicht mehr die innere Seite, ὑποκοή die nach aussen gewandte Seite des Glaubens."

¹On ἀπό see Blass-Debrunner, Greek Grammar, pp. 209-211; also W. Bauer, Greek-English Lexicon, p. 89; also the many examples given by Bleek, Hebräer II2, pp. 77f. Cf. Hb. 11:34 ἐδυναμώθησαν ἀπὸ ἁσθενείας; also Lk. 19:3; 24:41; Jn. 21:6 etc. To say that Jesus was heard "apart from" his godly fear makes little sense.

²For a survey of the exegesis of this phrase see either Michel, Hebräer (1975), pp. 222f., Spicq, Hébreux II, pp. 114-117, or the older work of Bleek, Hebräer II2, pp. 75-86. A. von Harnack, "Zwei alte dogmatische Korrekturen im Hebräerbrief," pp. 245ff., conjectures an early deletion of an original οὐκ before εἰσακουσθεῖς on dogmatic grounds--"not heard (and delivered) from his anxiety although he was the Son." This conjecture however lacks any attestation whatsoever. Jeremias has also discredited Harnack's conjecture by demonstrating that the καίπερ-clause can indeed introduce a protasis and thereby belongs quite properly with what follows instead of what precedes (Jeremias, "Hebr. 5:7-10," pp. 107f.; also Maurer, "Gottesfurcht," p. 276). Bultmann, "εὐλαβής," p. 753 and Windisch, Hebräerbrief, p. 43, tend to support Harnack's hypothesis. Blass-Debrunner, Greek Grammar, p. 211, suggest that ἀπὸ τῆς εὐλαβείας should be linked with ἔμαθεν rather than εἰσακουσθεῖς ("because of his piety he learned obedience through what he suffered"), but this fails to take καίπερ ὡν υἱός fully into account (Bultmann, "εὐλαβής," p. 753 n. 3, rightly rejects this interpretation). Others generally adopt the translation of Ambrose, exauditus ab illo metu (Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum 64, p. 382; cf. the old Latin versions "d" (5-6th c.) and "e" (oth c.), also the Peshitta). Taking εἰσακουσθεῖς ἀπὸ τῆς εὐλαβείας as a sort of "pregnant construction," several commentators thus translate it "heard (and delivered) from fear" (J. Calvin, Hebrews, p. 65; Bengel, Gnomon IV, p. 387; also modern commentators such as Hering, Hebrews, p. 39; Montefiore, Hebrews, p. 99; Brandenburger, "Text und Vorlagen," pp. 194, 218; Buchanan, Hebrews, pp. 97f.; M. Dibelius, "Gethsemane," trans. M. S. Enslin, Crozer Quarterly 12 (1935), pp. 254-265 (p. 257); A. Strobel, "Psalmengrundlage," p. 258 n. 19; Thurén, "Gebet und Gehorsam," p. 141). O. Cullman, Christology, p. 96, appears to take ἀπό in the sense "place from where," translating it then "heard in his fear" (also possibly

standing.¹ It is Jesus' attitude of godly fear, his careful regard for God and His will, which the author of Hebrews understands as the reason for Jesus' prayer being heard.

But what sense then can be made of the assertion that Jesus' prayer was "heard" because of his godly fear? The verb εἰσακούω indicates a positive response from God to Jesus' prayer, a granting of his petition,² but it is particularly difficult to outline what the author of Hebrews understood as the precise dimensions of this divine response. Indeed, the author himself does not pursue the matter in detail. This might suggest, as A. B. Bruce has taken it to do, that "the point to be emphasized is, not so much that the prayer of Jesus was heard, as that it needed to be heard: that he needed heavenly aid

the way Buchanan and Brandenburger understand this phrase). Andriessen and Lenglet, "Quelques passages difficiles," pp. 208-212, suggest that ἀπό be taken as temporal, "after his fear." Thus, taking the following καίπερ-clause with v.7, they arrive at the sense that it was after (ἀπό) his fear when Jesus was heard, although he was Son.

¹The great majority of interpreters prefer this rendering of the phrase ἀπὸ τῆς εὐλαβείας. See Delitzsch, Hebrews I, pp. 245ff.; Lünemann, Hebrews, pp. 206ff.; Bleek, Hebräer II, pp. 75ff.; Westcott, Hebrews, p. 127; Moffatt, Hebrews, pp. 65ff.; Dods, Hebrews, p. 289; Peake, Hebrews, p. 135; A. B. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 186; Nairne, Hebrews, p. 62; Jeremias, "Hebr. 5:7-10," p. 110; H. L. MacNeill, Christology, p. 22; F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, pp. 101ff.; Rissi, "Menschlichkeit," p. 38; P. E. Hughes, Hebrews, p. 186; Friedrich, "Das Lied," pp. 106, 109; Hewitt, Hebrews, p. 97; Lightfoot, "Savior," pp. 166-173; Loader, Sohn und Hohepriester, p. 101; Maurer, "Gottesfurcht," pp. 275-284; Azztridge, "Reverence," pp. 90-93; Omark, "Savior," p. 47; Schrenk, "ἱερός," p. 280; Boman, "Gebetskampf," p. 267; U. Luck, "Himmlisches und irdisches Geschehen im Hebräerbrief: Ein Beitrag zum Problem des 'historischen Jesus' im Urchristentum," NovT 6 (1963), p. 195 n.2; Schille, "Erwägungen," p. 97.

²Bauer, Greek-English Lexicon, p. 231; G. Kittel, "ἀκούω," TDNT I, ed. G. Kittel, trans. G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, 1964), pp. 216-225 (esp. p. 222); W. Mundle, "Hear, Obey," DNTT II, ed. C. Brown, pp. 172-180 (esp. p. 178). In Lk. 1:13 and Acts 10:31 εἰσακούω refers to the hearing of the prayers of Zechariah and Cornelius (cf. Mtt. 6:7). Braumann, "Hebr. 5:7-10," p. 279, calls εἰσακούω a terminus technicus for the answering of a prayer.

to drink the appointed cup."¹ Thus the emphasis would fall squarely on Jesus' frail humanity, his dependence on God for deliverance from death.

Nevertheless, strenuous scholarly efforts have been made to establish what the author of Hebrews understood to be the precise form of the divine response to Jesus' prayer. It is not hard to imagine that Hebrews' readers may have been concerned to know how God answered the prayer of Jesus since they, like Jesus, also faced the prospect of suffering and death.

However it is interpreted precisely, the author has suggested that Jesus prayed for deliverance ἐκ θανάτου.² Therefore, the "being-heard" must in some sense refer to and be seen in the context of death. We must then eliminate from consideration the view that Jesus was delivered from "fear" (εὐλαβεία = fear/anxiety), and thus "heard" in the sense of being strengthened to face the ordeal of suffering and death.³ The author clearly knew the expression φόβος θανάτου (2:15), but writes only θάνατος here. Neither could the "being-heard" have consisted of an exemption for Jesus from temporal suffering and physical death, for Jesus yet had to suffer and die. He was clearly not saved from physical death.⁴ Several scholars therefore suggest that God delivered Jesus from "death" in a larger sense. This larger conception of "death" could refer to the domain of death

¹A. B. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 186.

²Jesus prayed for his own deliverance (αὐτόν); it was not intercessory (contra Rissi, "Menschlichkeit," p. 42, also Thuren, "Gebet und Gehorsam," pp. 138ff.).

³Against those mentioned above p. 141 n. 2.

⁴This does not justify the desperate solution of Harnack, as noted above in our notes.

over which the Devil has power (2:14f.),¹ or more abstractly, to the realm of God-forsakenness or abandonment. The "being-heard" would then find its ultimate end in Jesus' resurrection or exaltation by God. However, even if the resurrection or exaltation was the ultimate end of the "being-heard," Jesus was yet "in the days of his flesh" and such an answer to his prayer would have been still future. He still had to endure temporal suffering and death. R. Omark suggests that Jesus' physical suffering and death itself was the way God paradoxically answered Jesus' prayer, thereby, delivering Jesus from the greater "death" of the loss of his Sonship and high priesthood, the failure to accomplish his mission.² Therefore, Jesus was not saved from temporal suffering and death, but in and through such a death from a greater "death."³ Indeed, there may be some justification for such a view in Hebrews itself. Jesus' earthly suffering and death were understood by the author of Hebrews to be both the divinely appropriate

¹See Jeremias, "Hebr. 5:7-10," p. 109; Braumann, "Hebr. 5:7-10," p. 280; Friedrich, "Das Lied," pp. 104ff.; Peake, Hebrews, p. 135; Lünemann, Hebrews, pp. 206ff.; Loader, Sohn und Hohepriester, pp. 101, 111ff. Delitzsch, Hebrews I, pp. 248f. writes: "It was the whole abyss of death itself into which the Lord looked down when he offered this supplication; He saw there the workings not only of evil men and of the demon-prince of death, but also of the ultimate ground of death, which is none other than the wrath of God Himself."

²Omark, "Savior," pp. 45ff.

³Ibid. Omark significantly points to a saving from 'death,' but 'death' understood in a larger sense of "the triumph of the forces of corruption and decay," "the seal of defeat, of destruction." Omark points to the paradoxical form of the divine response to Jesus' prayer in his conclusion: "Salvation for Jesus was not from temporal torment and death, but in and through such a death from the infinite failure and loss of saving Sonship and Messiahship. To go to death in saving ministry for others meant security for himself. To avoid death was to miss the achievement of his mission, and the forfeiture of his divine relationship" (p. 48). Similarly Delitzsch, Hebrews I, p. 249, comments: "The Son was heard, not by deliverance from the necessity of dying, but by temporal death being made for Him the gate of paradise and the cross of shame a ladder to heaven."

means whereby Jesus became the pioneer of his people's salvation (2:10, 14f.) and the basis of his exaltation (2:9).

On a different tack, W. R. G. Loader asserts that εἰσακουσθεῖς promises deliverance, but is not itself deliverance.¹ "Being-heard" promises exaltation, but occurs before the exaltation since Jesus still had to suffer. On a similar note B. F. Westcott wrote earlier of assurance:

True prayer. . . is the personal recognition and acceptance of the divine will. It follows that the hearing of prayer . . . is not so much the granting of a specific petition, which is assumed by the petitioner to be the way to the end desired, but the assurance that what is granted does most effectively lead to the end.²

But whatever the precise sense of εἰσακουσθεῖς ἀπὸ τῆς εὐλαβείας, the author of Hebrews has certainly confronted his readers with a Jesus who needed to be heard by God. Thus his humanity is strongly stressed and all doubt concerning his ability as a high priest to sympathize with his people's flesh-and-blood-conditioned existence has been erased.

B. Jesus' Obedience in Suffering

We turn then to the author's principal statement and the second motif drawn from Jesus' earthly life: καίπερ ὡν υἱὸς ἔμαθεν ἀφ' ὧν ἔπαθεν τὴν ὑπακοήν.

1. Concession. The καίπερ -clause may be grammatically connected either to what precedes (προσενέγκας or εἰσακουσθεῖς) or

¹Loader, Sohn und Hohepriester, p. 101. In this way Loader looks to the immediate form the "being-heard" must have taken for Jesus. Nevertheless, Loader understands the substance of the promise to be deliverance for Jesus out of death's domain.

²Westcott, Hebrews, p. 127.

to the following statement (ἐμαθεν ἀφ' ὧν ἔπαθεν τὴν ὑπακοήν);¹ however, we obtain the best reading and sense in taking it as a concessive clause introducing the following assertion that Jesus learned obedience through suffering.²

The concessive clause "Son though he was"³ indicates a hiatus between Jesus' Sonship (υἱός) and his learning of obedience through suffering.⁴ Clearly then the author understands υἱός in a special sense, for in Hb. 12:5ff. the υἱοὶ are chastised and disciplined precisely because they are υἱοὶ, but conversely here Jesus learns obedience through suffering although he was υἱός.⁵ That Jesus the Son, as

¹See καίπερ with a participle in Hb. 7:5; 12:17. Though it commonly introduces a final clause, thus connecting the καίπερ -clause with the preceding participial clauses, Jeremias has adduced several examples from the LXX where καίπερ is used to introduce a preliminary remark: Prov. 6:8; 2 Macc. 4:34; 4 Macc. 3:10, 15; 4:13; 15:24 ("Hebr. 5:7-10," p. 108 n. 4; see also Blass-Debrunner, Greek Grammar, p. 425; A. T. Robertson, Grammar, p. 1129; C. F. D. Moule, Idiom Book, p. 102).

²That the καίπερ -clause must go with the preceding εἰσακουσθεῖς is the key linguistic argument for Harnack's ("Korrekturen," pp. 254ff.) conjecture of an οὐκ before εἰσακουσθεῖς, then giving the sense "he was not heard although he was a son." However, the οὐκ is wholly unattested and it makes little sense to say "he was heard although he was the Son." On the other hand, it makes good sense to take the καίπερ -clause with the following as a concession, thus suggesting the contrast between Jesus' Sonship and his learning of obedience through suffering.

³As in 1:1 (ἐν υἱῷ) the absence of the definite article should not be translated as an indefinite article in English. The special sense of υἱός implied here in this concession is best translated "Son though he was" (Moffatt, Hebrews, p. 66; F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 103; Westcott, Hebrews, p. 128; NEB; Phillips; not as the AV and RSV, "although he was a Son").

⁴On the hiatus here see especially H. L. MacNeill, Christology, p. 22: "The writer was quite conscious of the hiatus between this picture of a devout, praying, tempted, God-fearing man and the conception of a Son to whom one would expect obedience to be natural, and not require such arduous discipline and suffering for its development." See also Windisch, Hebräerbrief, p. 44; Grässer, "Jesus," p. 78; Peake, Hebrews, p. 135; Westcott, Hebrews, p. 128; et al.

⁵Grässer, "Jesus," p. 78, notes that while there is an apparent incompatibility between Jesus' Sonship and a learning of obedience

perhaps understood in the exalted terms of 1:1ff., would learn obedience through suffering was understandably difficult to accept and unexpected. But by drawing attention to the contrast here the author has specially emphasized the following assertion that Jesus learned obedience through suffering.

2. The Enactment of Obedience (ἔμαθεν . . . τὴν ὑπακοήν). In 4:15 the author asserted Jesus' ability to sympathize with men as if it were contested by some.¹ Here again in 5:8 the author may similarly be anticipating a question in his readers' minds, thus emphasizing the fact that the Son Himself "learned obedience through what he suffered."²

But what did the author mean here by ἔμαθεν . . . τὴν ὑπακοήν ? "Obedience," as G. Kittel writes, relates to persons who stand in a divinely willed relation of subordination.³ Thus it refers supremely to a person's disposition or attitude to place himself in

through suffering, that same learning of obedience through suffering was perfectly compatible with Jesus' high priesthood. However, the author does not say "high priest though he was;" indeed, it was because he was high priest that he learned obedience through what he suffered. See also Thurén, "Gebet und Gehorsam," pp. 138ff.; G. Bornkamm, "Sohnschaft und Leiden," Judentum, Urchristentum, Kirche, ed. W. Eltester, Festschrift für J. Jeremias (Berlin, 1960), pp. 188-98.

¹See above ch. 3 on Hb. 4:15,

²Thurén, "Gebet und Gehorsam," pp. 138f. inquires: "Warum wird der Vordersatz 'obgleich er Sohn war' eingefügt? Der Verf. wartete offenbar einen Einspruch zu hören: 'Wieso musste Jesus Gehorsam lernen? War er nicht von Anfang an ein gehorsamer Sohn Gottes?' Der Verf. erklärt, dass er seine These vom Erlernen des Gehorsams trotz einer möglichen Einwendung festhalten will. Als ewiger Sohn Gottes (v.5) brauchte Jesus natürlich nicht erst im Fleische Gehorsam lernen, aber als Hoherpriester, der in allem versucht wurde, müsste er es."

³Kittel, "ἀκούω," pp. 223f.; also see Mundle, "Hear, Obey," pp. 179f.; Bauer, Greek-English Lexicon, pp. 844f. Cf. ὑπακοή in Ro. 6:16 (opposite ἀμαρτία); 5:19 (opposite παρακοή); 15:18; 16:19; 2 Cor. 7:15; 10:6; etc.

subordination under the will of God. The author of Hebrews understands Jesus from his advent into this world to have evidenced such a disposition--ἰδοὺ ἤκω τοῦ ποιῆσαι τὸ θέλημα σου (10:5-9).¹ Also the author has just mentioned Jesus' εὐλαβεία (5:7), a term which suggests strongly Jesus' supreme regard for God and His will.²

This is perhaps the point at which to take special note of another passage in Hebrews which addresses the issue of Jesus' obedience, Hb. 10:5-10. In Hb. 10:1-4 the author has already underlined the inadequacy of the OT sacrifices to accomplish a lasting cleansing from sins. "It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins" (10:4 NIV). They were but the adumbration of the reality which would be found in the sacrifice of Jesus, the theme to which the author then turns. The author of Hebrews sets the context for his following quotation of Ps. 40:6-8 (Ps. 39 LXX) with the introductory words, διὸ εἰσερχόμενος εἰς τὸν κόσμον λέγει .³ Thus, the author of Hebrews from his christocentric perspective places upon the lips of the pre-existent Christ the words of the psalmist:⁴ "Sacrifice and

¹Hebrews transfers the words of Ps. 40:7-8 to Jesus at his advent from heaven and considers that aim to be fulfilled in Christ's self-offering on the cross (10:9-10).

²On the connexion of words in Hb. 5:7-9 O. Michel, Hebräer (1975), p. 224 n. 1, suggests: "Vielleicht darf man darauf aufmerksam machen, dass εἰσακούειν, ὑπακούειν und ὑπακοή doch in einem Zusammenhang stehen müssen, da alle drei Worte von demselben Wortstamm gebildet sind (erhören, gehorchen, Gehorsam)." The continuity of thought between εὐλαβεία (v.7) and ὑπακοή (v.8) further suggests the unity of 5:7-8.

³There is an interesting parallel here to the messianic formula "the coming one" seen in the gospel of John: Jn. 6:14, εἰσερχόμενος εἰς τὸν κόσμον . . . ; and Jn. 11:27, (Martha's confession) ὁ εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἐρχόμενος . . . Also note the similarity here with Hb. 1:6, ὅταν δὲ πάλιν εἰσαγάγῃ . . . εἰς τὴν οἰκουμένην.

⁴See above in this present study the section on Hb. 2:6-8 (Ps. 8) and Hb. 2:12-13 (a passage in which the author of Hebrews also places on Jesus' lips the words of the psalmist, Ps. 22:22, and also the prophet Isaiah). Throughout Hebrews the author characteristically

offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me; with burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased. Then I said, 'Here I am--it is written about me in the scroll--I have come to do your will, O God'" (Hb. 10:5-7 NIV). Here is a brilliant example of the author's christological exegesis of the OT. First, he cites the OT text, then he proceeds to provide a midrash (10:8-10) on the passage, lending support to his argument for the superiority of Jesus' high priestly sacrifice. The focal point of the OT passage is quite clear. A holy Israelite or Davidic king emphasizes the fundamental truth that what ultimately pleases God is not sacrifices, but obedience to His will. As such the psalmist is expressing the prophetic truth, "to obey is better than sacrifice" (1 Sam. 15:22).¹ The LXX reading σῶμα δὲ κατηρτίσω μοι (Ps. 40:6 LXX/Hb. 10:5) for the Hebrew original "ears have you dug for me" (אָזְנוֹתַי כָּדַגְתָּ לִּי) remains a textual conundrum,² though in either case the meaning seems essentially the same: God provides man with the opportunity to serve Him with obedience ("ears" which hear and obey; a "body" given in wholehearted obedience). The stress of the Ps. 40 quotation on wholehearted obedience to God's will, which answers God's will as no animal sacrifice could, becomes explicit with the last words of the

ascribes the words of OT scriptures to God, the Holy Spirit (e.g., 3:7-11) and to Jesus.

¹Cf. Isa. 1:11ff.; Amos 5:21f.; Hos. 6:6; Ps. 51:16ff.; Jer. 7:21f.

²The alteration in the LXX from the Massoretic text of this line in Ps. 40 has occasioned much debate, and no little imaginative conjecture. Did the LXX translators possess a variant Hebrew text which they then accurately translated? Are the differences in the present LXX text the result of a copyist's error? Did the LXX translators engage in some rather free translation or paraphrasing the idiomatic Hebrew phrase into language more suitable to the Hellenistic world? No hard evidence is forthcoming for either of the first two possibilities. The last option (an interpretive rendering of the Hebrew idiom) has an inherent plausibility which makes it the most likely solution. See the commentaries ad loc.

psalm quoted by the author of Hebrews: Ἰδοὺ ἤκω . . . τοῦ ποιῆσαι , ὁ θεός , τὸ θέλημα σου .¹ But, the author of Hebrews lifts this fundamental prophetic truth to a new level: instead of the formalistic levitical rites and sacrifices of the OT cultus, only the personal obedience in the ἐφάπαξ sacrifice of Jesus truly accomplishes the will of God and effects lasting cleansing from sins. Yet, as Moffatt rightly observed,² the author does not so much draw a contrast between sacrifice and obedience as between the ignorant and involuntary offering of the OT sacrificial victims, and the fully conscious self-offering and sacrifice of Jesus, voluntarily submitting himself to God's will in obedience. This linkage of obedience to sacrifice is the crucial point for the author of Hebrews. As J. Denny puts it, "sacrifice into which obedience enters."³ Such a sacrifice has lasting effect for the forgiveness of sins and the removal of guilt. The permanence, effectiveness and once-for-all quality of Jesus' sacrifice of obedience all stand in stark contrast to the OT sacrifices and offerings.

Here then in the author's emphasis on Christ's obedience lies the significant point of contact between these two passages, 5:7-8 and 10:5-10. For both Hebrews' high priest christology also forms the context within which the reference to Jesus' obedience functions.

¹The author of Hebrews in choosing this psalm to place on Jesus' lips has laid special emphasis on the intentionality of Jesus' obedience. Jesus' life goal was to do God's will. At this point O. Michel, Hebräer (1975), p. 338 n. 6, identifies several parallels with the Johannine literature: "Die Wendung ἰδοὺ ἤκω (V.7) entspricht semitisch der Aussage 1 Joh 5:20: ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ ἤκει . . . and Joh 8:42: ἐξηλθὼν καὶ ἤκω . Auch die 'Erfüllung des Willens Gottes' als Ziel des Glaubens und Handelns Jesu entspricht genau dem johanneischen Denken (Joh 4:34). Liturgie und Schriftzeugnis setzen eine alte christologische Tradition voraus."

²Moffatt, Hebrews, pp. 138f.

³J. Denny, The Death of Christ (London, 1951), p. 131.

Yet, there is a noteworthy difference in christological perspective in the two passages. Hb. 5:7ff. presents Jesus' obedience, "learned through suffering," as proof of his ability to sympathize with human-kind's life situation (5:2) and thus, to be a qualified high priest. But, Hb. 10:5-10 links Jesus' obedience to his superiority as the sacrificial victim. Thus, Jesus the great high priest is at the same time the sacrificial victim--and his obedience in his earthly life is for Hebrews the determining factor in both roles.

But though such a disposition to obey God might well be pre-supposed of the unique Son of God,¹ that it needed to be "learned" would perhaps not have been so readily accepted. In what sense had the Son "learned" obedience? The author could scarcely have conceived of any change in the Son from disobedience to obedience.² For Hebrews, Jesus entered this world as an obedient Son (10:5-9) and never anywhere deviates from the pathway of obedience (cf. 4:15; 7:26).³ Rather, ἔμαθεν here points to the enactment in Jesus' life of his personal subordination under the will of God.⁴ K. H. Rengstorf speaks here of the "conscious demonstration of obedience."⁵ Jesus

¹Hebrews describes the Son not only as mediator of creation, but the Creator (1:3, 10) himself. Jesus the Son is also described as the one who "reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature" (1:3).

²The reverse is the case with mankind, whose "learning" of obedience usually involves a change from disobedience to obedience.

³Though tempted in every way like men, Jesus remained χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας (4:15); ὁσίος, ἄκακος, ἀμίαντος, κεχωρισμένος ἀπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτωλῶν (7:26); he is therefore exempted from the need to make sacrifice for his own sins (7:27).

⁴See K. H. Rengstorf, "μανθάνω," TDNT IV, ed. G. Kittel, trans. G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, 1967), pp. 390-462 (note esp. pp. 410-412); also Rissi, "Menschlichkeit," p. 43; Maurer, "Gottesfurcht," pp. 282ff.; Lünemann, Hebrews, pp. 209f.; Moffatt, Hebrews, p. 67; F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 103.

⁵Rengstorf, "μανθάνω," p. 411.

has brought his disposition of obedience into active expression, a practical learning of the human consequences of single-minded devotion to God's way.

3. Jesus' Suffering. The author expands his basic assertion by identifying the locus of this learning, Jesus' suffering. "From what he suffered" (ἅφ' ὧν ἔπαθεν) Jesus brought obedience into active expression. Thus the author of Hebrews grounds Jesus' obedience not in his divine dignity or status as Son of God, but in his experience of suffering during his earthly life. Similarly in 4:15 the author does not base his assertion of Jesus' sinlessness upon his divine status, but rather upon Jesus' active response to the temptations he experienced during his earthly life.¹ Sinlessness and obedience were not just gifts bestowed but qualities of life to be achieved, they had to be "learned" and battled for.² The Son learned obedience in the only way possible as a genuine man, in actively submitting to God's ways within human situations where disobedience was a real option, especially under the pressure of spiritual, emotional and physical distress.³ How different is Hebrews' perspective from the church's later dogmatic formulations where the idea of "original sin" or the total depravity of the human race (humanity as a massa perditionis) is held, and Christ alone is pure and perfect in a static, metaphysical sense. For the author of Hebrews, decision is involved--

¹For Hebrews, 'obedience' and 'sinlessness' are roughly equivalent, looking at the same reality from different perspectives (positive and negative). Notably both Jesus' 'obedience' and 'sinlessness' are worked out in the course of Jesus' earthly experience. They are therefore active dynamic things, rather than static.

²O. Michel, "Die Lehre von der christlichen Vollkommenheit nach der Anschauung des Hebräerbriefes," Theologische Studien und Kritiken NF 1 (1934-35), p. 349.

³Montefiore, Hebrews, p. 99.

the Son might not have "learned" obedience.

In the following verses we see that because of his sufferings Jesus was made perfect (τελειωθείς, 5:9) and thereby he became the source of eternal salvation to those who obey him (ἐγένετο πᾶσιν τοῖς ὑπακούουσιν αὐτῷ ἄϊτιος σωτηρίας αἰωνίου) and was designated high priest after the order of Melchizedek (προσαγορευθεὶς . . . ἄρχιερεὺς κατὰ τὴν τάξιν Μελχισέδεκ , 5:10). Similarly Hb. 2:10 relates that "in bringing many sons to glory it was fitting for God . . . to make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (διὰ παθημάτων τελειῶσαι). In both these passages Hebrews has connected Jesus' sufferings with his perfection (τελειῶσαι, τελειωθείς) and his consequent role in the salvation of many sons (ἀρχηγός, ἄϊτιος , ἄρχιερεὺς).¹ There is implied in both a note of process, development or becoming with regard to Jesus. On the one hand, it is not too bold to speak of Jesus' own life in terms of process and growth,² or, as O. Cullmann so vigorously asserts, an "inner human development."³ Through various situations of suffering in changing human conditions Jesus consistently obeyed God, even unto that final and climactic obedience in suffering on the cross (πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου, 2:9; cf. Phil. 2:8, μέχρι θανάτου).⁴ Thus in

¹Note the connexion of these same motifs with regard to Jesus in the hortatory section in 12:1-3.

²Cf. Lk. 2:52.

³Cullmann, Christology, p. 96.

⁴Cullmann, Christology, p. 96, also perceives a note of development in the phrase μέχρι θανάτου in Phil. 2:8. On the relation of Phil. 2:8 and Hb. 5:8f. see especially Thuren, "Gebet und Gehorsam," pp. 142-146 (Thuren also looks at the relation of Hb. 5:8f. to 1 Pt. 5:5-7). Thuren draws special attention to the ταπεινωσις motif with regard to Jesus' prayer and obedience. Rengstorff, "μανθάνω," pp. 411f., notes the significant difference between Phil. 2:8 and Hb. 5:8 is that Hebrews denotes by ἀφ' ὧν ἔπαθεν the nature and manner of the learning of obedience.

light of the context of obedience learned through sufferings even the notion of Jesus' ethical development cannot be wholly discarded.¹ On the other hand, it is on the basis of Jesus' earthly life of consummate obedience learned through sufferings that he becomes² and now is³ the ἀρχηγός and αἴτιος of salvation for all who obey him (παῶν τοῖς ὑπακούουσιν αὐτῷ). Furthermore, on the basis of his sufferings, Jesus has been designated their ἀρχιερεὺς and can now communicate God's grace, mercy and help to those now struggling in temptations and sufferings (cf. 2:17f.; 4:14ff.).⁴ Thus the note of becoming or process in Jesus' life is evident not only in his own person but in relation to his vocation as well.⁵ Indeed, both these aspects are inseparable in Hebrews. The author has interwoven both

¹Peake, Hebrews, p. 135, writes: "Progress is implied, not in the completeness of his submission to his Father's will, but in the fact that the tests of obedience were increasingly severe. Each lesson in his moral education were perfectly mastered, but the final lessons were of unparalleled difficulty."

²Note ἐγένετο here in 5:9. Even in Hb. 1:1-4 M. Silva, "Perfection and Eschatology in Hebrews," WThJ 39 (1976), pp. 62f., detects a sense of development or process vis-a-vis the Son. Curiously, the name (ὄνομα) which the Son (1:2) inherits is 'Son' again (1:4ff.), though this time, Silva thinks, as a Messianic title which he receives in connexion with some sort of change in his human nature. Silva points especially to the use of the participle γεγόμενος (instead of ὢν) in v.4 as indicating a temporal distinction--Jesus has become something he was not before, viz. the Messianic Son (1:4ff.). If Silva's understanding is correct, it offers a parallel for the note of process carried by ἐγένετο in 5:9. Indeed, Silva points to καθαρισμὸν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ποιησάμενος (1:3) as a reference to Jesus' suffering which results in his exaltation to God's right hand.

³Though the foundation of Hebrews' christology is rooted in Jesus' past earthly life, the paraenetic orientation of 4:14-5:10 and 2:9-18 points toward the present function Jesus now performs as the present ἀρχηγός, αἴτιος and ἀρχιερεὺς of his people.

⁴R. Longenecker, "The Obedience of Christ in the Theology of the Early Church," Reconciliation and Hope, ed. R. Banks, Leon Morris Festschrift (London, 1974), pp. 148f., writes that "what Hebrews has in mind when it speaks of process in our Lord's life and ministry concerns . . . his redemptive capacity and work."

⁵Moffatt, Hebrews, p. 67.

Jesus' inner personal perfection and his vocational perfection into a unity.¹ Jesus is made perfect both in himself and in his redemptive work for men.

In speaking of Jesus' learning from what he suffered the author has firmly stressed Jesus' humanity and susceptibility to human contingencies. Jesus too must decide for God in situations of temptation and suffering.² Despite his nature as divine Son (καίπερ ὡν υἱός), Jesus, like the many sons, must learn obedience as a man in the school of suffering (12:4-11). It is not difficult to perceive an underlying concern here to address the conditions faced by Hebrews' readers. Jesus' obedience only becomes relevant to them in that that obedience was achieved within the human realm where the result may have been otherwise. His obedience was not automatic or inherited, but voluntarily enacted at great cost in his earthly life.³

It is important further to note the connexion in the author's preceding discussion between Jesus' suffering and temptation. This is especially clear in 2:17f. where it is said of Jesus that he can help those who are now tempted because he himself suffered and was tempted (ἐν ᾧ γὰρ πέπονθεν αὐτὸς πειρασθεῖς δύναται τοῖς πειραζομένοις

¹Michel, "Vollkommenheit," p. 349.

²See above chapter on 4:15. The "weaknesses" which are inherent to man's flesh-and-blood-conditioned existence lead to temptation and suffering and the decision to obey God is made in this situation.

³The 'voluntariness' of Jesus' obedience is a crucial point for Hebrews. H. Anderson, Jesus and Christian Origins, p. 282, comments: "While there is hardly anywhere in the New Testament a greater stress than here on the deity of the Son, . . . it is none the less of the very essence of the author's faith and life that Jesus, at the cost of an agony accompanied with 'strong crying and tears' (Heb. 5:7), voluntarily chose the 'shame' of the Cross (Heb. 12:2) and the 'reproach' involved in it (Heb. 13:13)."

βοηθῆσαι , 2:18).¹ Similarly in 4:14-16 when exhorting his readers to hold fast to their confession of Jesus by drawing attention to Jesus' present ministry as high priest and ability to help them now in their time of need, the author bases his exhortation especially on Jesus' ability to sympathize proven by his human experience of temptations--though remaining sinless (πεπειρασμένον . . . χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας).² In our present passage Jesus' obedience, the positive equivalent of sinlessness, is learned from what he suffered. Clearly the motifs of Jesus' temptation, suffering and obedience/sinlessness are closely interrelated in Hebrews and together concern a common theme, that of Jesus' present ministry of intercession as merciful high priest.³ But Jesus' humanity is emphasized in 5:7f. not only to indicate his compliance with the high priestly requirement as outlined in 5:1-3,⁴ but with the intention of bolstering the lagging confidence of his readers now in the exalted redeemer by referring them back to Jesus' solidarity--and hence his present sympathy--with them in his earthly life.

C. Summary Statement

Thus far in our examination of Hb. 5:7f. we have attempted to describe Hebrews' presentation and understanding of Jesus' earthly life. From the opening words of v.7--ὅς ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ --it was clear that Jesus' earthly life was the reference point for the following statement. In what follows, the author

¹See above in section on Hb. 2:18.

²See above in section on Hb. 4:15.

³See Loader, Sohn und Hohepriester, pp. 98f. n. 22.

⁴The essence of the requirement is the ability of the high priest to "sympathize" with his people.

underscores Jesus' humanity, especially from the aspects of his passionate plea concerning deliverance from death (v.7) and his voluntary obedience in suffering (v.8). In the larger context of 4:14-5:10 we see that the emphasis on Jesus' humanity points to his resultant attitude of sympathy, corresponding in the chiasm to the sympathy (μετρίων^{αι}θεῖν) evident in any high priest (5:1-3). Jesus' humanity and consequent sympathy is also a crucial point in the preceding exhortation (4:14-16). In specifics, the account of Jesus' struggle in prayer occurs only here in Hebrews, though the motif of Jesus' suffering is drawn on throughout Hebrews.

We have also made brief observations on certain features of the christological and paraenetic function of Jesus' earthly life in this passage. For Hebrews' high priest christology Jesus' human experiences establish his effective fulfillment of a primary requirement for becoming an ἀρχιερεὺς, his open solidarity with mankind and his sympathy with their frailties. But the pastoral intention and orientation of this passage is plain. The author clearly aims to encourage and exhort his readers, to strengthen their failing resolve to persevere in their confession despite their sufferings and the temptation to renounce or relax their grasp upon their faith in Christ. Jesus' earthly life functions in a double way with regard to this intention. On one hand, Hebrews points to the present exalted heavenly high priest, whose sympathy with mankind is grounded in his earthly experience as a man, and points to his ability to provide a present help (cf. 2:17f.; 4:16) which will enable them to persevere. But as well, on another level, Jesus has been set before the readers as an example, one who worked out his faithfulness and obedience to God in the crucible of human sufferings and temptations, and who was thus made perfect (2:10; 5:9).

IV. Background (Tradition History)

We turn now to investigate the background or traditions utilized by the author of Hebrews in his reference to Jesus' prayer and suffering in vv.7-8.

But prior to pursuing this particular task certain words and expressions in vv.9-10 demand some mention here. Jesus' earthly life, as presented in vv.7-8, forms the prelude to and ground of his "being-made-perfect" (τελειωθείς, v.9). Without digressing into the particulars of Hebrews' characteristic ideas about "perfection,"¹ τελειωθείς here clearly points toward Jesus' becoming the "source of eternal salvation" (v.9) and being designated a "high priest according to the order of Melchizedek" (v.10). It is not too difficult to perceive here the common humiliation-exaltation scheme of the early Christian kerygma in these verses (vv.7-10).² In v.10 Hebrews again cites Ps. 110:4 (cf. 5:6) focusing attention once more on his central theme that Jesus is our great high priest (4:14ff.).³ Jesus has therefore become the source of salvation to all those who obey him (αἴτιος σωτηρίας αἰωνίου, v.9). This description, which recalls τὸν ἀρχηγὸν τῆς σωτηρίας αὐτῶν in 2:10, is a common Greek and Hellenistic phrase which Hebrews employs here in his exposition of the

¹On the question of the precise connotation of Jesus' "being-perfected" there is considerable discussion. See above our ch. 2 p. 50 n.4 for a listing of the most notable works on this subject in Hebrews.

²Some also perceive in καίπερ ὧν υἱός an allusion to Christ's pre-existence. Thus, 5:8 presents Jesus' pre-existence and humiliation, and 5:9f. his exaltation.

³That Jesus was an ἀρχιερεὺς Hebrews has stated before in 2:17; 3:1 and 4:14, but in anticipation of his peculiar interpretation of that high priesthood in ch. 7 the author here introduces Jesus as a high priest κατὰ τὴν τάξιν Μελχισέδεκ (5:6, 10; cf. 6:20).

deliverance wrought by Jesus the high priest.¹ The reference πᾶσιν τοῖς ὑπακούουσιν αὐτῷ² plainly reflects the paraenetic orientation of this passage, looking back to the example of Jesus' own obedience to God (ὑπακοή, v.8) despite suffering.

However, our special concern here is with the reference in 5:7-8 to Jesus' earthly life and the traditions which lay behind that reference. We turn now to this issue.

A. The 'Paideia' Tradition

The major clause ἔμαθεν ἅφ' ὧν ἔπαθεν(v.8) reflects a common Greek rhyming word-play (μαθός /παθός) which affirmed that suffering leads to learning or instruction (παιδεία).³ This so-called 'paideia' tradition⁴ in which suffering somehow leads to learning or education is carried on from the classical Greek writers into Hellenistic-Judaism. Philo⁵ especially reveals his acquaintance with

¹The description αἴτιος σωτηρίας αἰωνίου occurs only here in the Bible. It is, however, used in a religious and secular sense by Philo, Josephus and pagan writers. For a list of examples see R. Williamson, Philo and Hebrews, pp. 84-88. Williamson, however, is highly critical of the conclusion that there is here a close relationship between the terminology and thought of Philo and the author of Hebrews. He concludes that its common usage by Jewish and pagan writers indicates that the argument for philonic dependence here is overstated.

²The phrase πᾶσιν τοῖς ὑπακούουσιν αὐτῷ points to the conditionality of salvation; their obedience to Christ is required. The paraenetic flavour in these words is well noted in the well-known observation of H. Strathmann, Hebräer, p. 94: "Mahnend erhebt der Verfasser wieder den Finger."

³See Bleek, Hebräer II2, pp. 88f., who cites numerous examples from classical literature (most notable is Aeschylus' "Agamemnon," 176ff.; also Herodotus, I, 207; Pindar, "Isthm.," i, 40; Sophocles, "Trach.," 142f.; Xenophon, "Cyrop.," iii, 1, 17).

⁴L. K. K. Dey, Patterns of Perfection, pp. 222ff., examines this so-called 'paideia' tradition specifically in light of the 'perfection' theme in Hebrews.

⁵E.g., Philo, de Somn. ii, 107 (ὃ παθὼν ἀκριβῶς ἔμαθεν. . . ; of Joseph who learned by experience); de Fug., 138 (ἔμαθ' ὃν μὲν ὃ

the style and sense of this 'paideia' tradition. But it is also adopted elsewhere in Hellenistic-Jewish literature, notably in the Wisdom of Solomon, 2 and 4 Maccabees.¹ Their interpretation of the tradition in light of Israel's and the Jewish martyrs' suffering, temptation and martyrdom is particularly noteworthy. There not only is suffering understood as educative, but it somehow is seen as part of a divine education. In some way it is in line with God's purpose and will. In 2 Maccabees Israel and the martyrs experience suffering and chastisement not for destruction, but for divine education (παιδεία).² In 4 Maccabees the third brother to suffer martyrdom says with his dying breath: ἡμεῖς . . . διὰ παιδείαν καὶ ἀρετὴν θεοῦ ταῦτα πάσχομεν.³ Notably also, Jewish martyrology is based on the twin facts of the voluntarily accepted humiliation or suffering of the martyr in his pursuance of God's way and will (obedience) and the consequent exaltation of the martyr by God.⁴ Eduard

ἔπαθον); de Spec. Leg., iv, 29 (ἵνα ἐκ τοῦ παθεῖν μάθῃ; one learned by experience to be careful when lighting fire to rubbish too close to a threshing floor); de vita Mos., ii, 280; Quis Her., 73; et al. Most of the examples from Philo have a secular rather than religious connotation, frequently in the sense of learning from past mistakes or experience.

¹Wis Sol 11:9-10; 12:22 (mercy, not punishment, is the object of God's chastisement of His people); 2 Macc. 6:12, 16 (Israel's chastisement is educative, both as preventive medicine and as a warning; it points again to God's mercy); 2 Macc. 6:27f., 31 (Eleazar as an example in his suffering); and 4 Macc. 10:10-11.

²2 Macc. 6:12-16. It was out of kindness that God chastised Israel for her acts of impiety, not allowing Israel to go to the heights of sin and thereby incurring much greater wrath. God's chastisement of Israel (in her suffering) thus points to His attitude of steadfast mercy toward Israel. This same theme is taken up by the author of Hebrews in 12:5-11 concerning Christians' suffering as the discipline (παιδεία) of the Lord. See G. Bornkamm, "Sohnschaft und Leiden," pp. 188-198, who considers this theme especially in reference to Hb. 12:5-11.

³4 Macc. 10:10-11.

⁴The humiliation (costly obedience to God's ways) and exaltation scheme in Jewish martyrology is evident here in 2 Macc. 7.

Schweizer summarizes:

Judaism frequently speaks of the righteous one who humbles himself or who voluntarily accepts humiliation by suffering and death in obedience to God. Suffering in particular is very valuable as atonement for one's own sins or vicarious atonement for other people's. As a reward the righteous one is exalted by God, secretly already on earth, but especially in the world to come, where he finds his seat reserved for him in heaven, the throne of glory, and there acts as a judge and executioner. This exaltation can also be pictured physically as an assumption from the earth, as an ascension to heaven.¹

To the reader the martyr is held up as a paradigmatic hero. In 2 Maccabees, Eleazar is explicitly called a ὑπόδειγμα, an example for emulation.² Furthermore, the innocent suffering of Israel and the martyrs may have been regarded as atoning, expiating even the sins of others in Israel (4 Macc. 1:11).³

There appear to be points of contact between this interpretation of suffering in the 'paideia' tradition of Hellenistic-Judaism and the presentation of Jesus' suffering here in Hb. 5:8ff. Jesus' suffering too is educative, that through which Jesus "learns" obedience to God. Furthermore, Jesus' suffering is understood as part of God's purpose, as divinely "fitting" (2:10)⁴ in that it relates ultimately to God's purpose of mercy toward men.⁵ Through

¹E. Schweizer, Lordship and Discipleship, Studies in Biblical Theology 28 (London, 1960), p. 30.

²2 Macc. 6:27, 31.

³Schweizer, Lordship and Discipleship, pp. 25ff., observes that all innocent suffering was regarded as atoning, frequently for Israel as a whole.

⁴The formula "fitting to God" (ἔπρεπεν θεῷ) also occurs in Philo, though the thought of Hebrews in 2:10 concerning the fitness of Christ's sufferings and passion was "just about as far removed from Philo's conception of the nature of God as it is possible to get" (Williamson, Philo and Hebrews, pp. 88-93.)

⁵Moffatt, Hebrews, pp. 66f., rightly notes that frequently in the Greek writers and Philo as well the 'paideia' tradition has a "learn-from-your-mistakes" sense. Thus it is commonly applied to

suffering Jesus became the source of his people's salvation and the means of their access to the throne of grace as their high priest (4:14ff.; 5:9). We have already noted the humiliation-exaltation pattern present here in Hb. 5:7-10. He who enacted obedience voluntarily in the human crucible of suffering is now a great high priest who has "passed through the heavens" (4:14) and sits enthroned at the right hand of God in heaven (1:3, 13; Ps. 110:1). Then again, like the martyrs, Jesus too stands out as a paradigm whose example of obedience to God under severe duress encourages others to persevere in obedience ($\pi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\iota\nu\ \tau\omicron\iota\varsigma\ \acute{\upsilon}\pi\alpha\kappa\omicron\upsilon\sigma\upsilon\sigma\iota\nu\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\hat{\omega}$, 5:9).¹ Yet it should specially be noted that Hebrews' readers are specifically exhorted to obey Jesus himself ($\alpha\upsilon\tau\hat{\omega}$). This is a clear point of distinction from Jewish martyrology. For Hebrews, Jesus has become the focal point of his religious faith and life in a way that the Jewish martyrs never were for the Jews.² Finally, Jesus' suffering and death was clearly regarded by Hebrews as atoning for the sins of his people (1:3f.; 2:9 $\acute{\upsilon}\pi\epsilon\rho\ \pi\alpha\nu\tau\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$, 2:17), though admittedly Hb. 5:7ff. does not mention this explicitly.³

people who are unable to learn in any other way than by suffering. Hebrews, however, is more in line with the 'paideia' tradition as seen in Wis Sol, 2 and 4 Macc. where innocent suffering was interpreted in light of a divine purpose or design or discipline (hence its fitness, see 2 Macc. 6:27f., 31; 4 Macc. 10:10-11). We may perhaps also point to Job and to the picture of the Suffering Servant of Isaiah (42:6; 49:6; 60:3) who becomes a "light unto the nations."

¹See above p. 154.

²E. Schweizer, Lordship and Discipleship, p. 41, sees Jesus' uniqueness in his calling of others to be his disciples and in understanding Israel's destiny to have been realized in himself and his mission. Hebrews also reflects this singular christocentricity in which Jesus is clearly set apart from other righteous men and martyrs in Israel's past.

³Neither is the atoning value of Jesus' death mentioned explicitly in the Christ-hymn of Phil. 2:5-11. Schweizer explains that all innocent suffering endured by servants of God was regarded

But while Hebrews' reference to Jesus' suffering here in 5:8 does likely reflect a linguistic and interpretive awareness of this 'paideia' tradition, it is highly unlikely that Hebrews here makes no reference to the historical tradition about Jesus' suffering. Indeed, the extreme importance of the historicity of Jesus' suffering for Hebrews' argument would seem to make reference to historical tradition indispensable. Jesus' suffering and learning of obedience as a man establishes his real solidarity with men and thus gives real force to the exhortation to hold faithfully onto the Christian confession.

But even so the reference to Jesus' "suffering" is general and therefore difficult to identify with any specific incident(s) in Jesus' life. Certain considerations may however be taken into account. We may consider Hebrews' use of the πάσχω word-group in reference to Jesus. In Hb. 2:9 (πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου) and 13:2 (ἐξω τῆς πύλης ἔπαθεν) the reference clearly seems to be Jesus' death itself. However, in Hb. 2:10 (διὰ παθημάτων) and 2:18 (ἐν ᾧ γὰρ πέπονθεν) such a restricted perspective is not so obvious. The latter pair of references may very well refer in a broader sense to the various stages of Jesus' passion or even his whole life of suffering culminating in his death. Then too we may look to Phil. 2:8 which like our passage refers to Jesus' obedience, an obedience "unto death" (μέχρι θανάτου). Yet even here μέχρι θανάτου may point to that death as the final act in a longer process of obedience. Clearly then we must look to the immediately preceding context in Hebrews 5:7 for any possible clarification in this regard. We turn then to v.7 and the question of the background of Jesus' struggle in prayer.

as atoning; therefore, both in Phil. 2 and Hb. 5 this was assumed (Ibid., pp. 25f.)

B. The Psalms

Hb. 5:7 contains the sole reference in Hebrews to Jesus in prayer. Understandably then the terminology used here is often unique to the epistle. The words δέησις , ἱκετηρίας , κραυγῆς , εἰσακουσθεῖς , and προσένεγκας (with accusative only here)¹ occur here only in Hebrews. But while peculiar terms and expressions may be expected in such a unique account, we must still ask whether the terminology used here has been influenced by descriptions elsewhere of similar events. Most commonly mentioned at this point is the likely influence of the LXX Psalms,² particularly those Psalms (of lament) in which the psalmist recounts his struggle in prayer faced with the prospect of suffering or death. Indeed, the prominence of the Psalms throughout Hebrews and here in the immediate context of 5:7 (cf. 5:5, 6, 10) would seem to point in this direction.

Some interpreters have pointed to a particular Psalm(s) or portion of a Psalm(s) as the immediate background for Hb. 5:7. M. Dibelius, in his essay "Gethsemane," indicates the combination of Ps. 30:23 and 38:13 (LXX): "If we join these two passages, we have the most important material of the passage Hebrews 5 before us."³ A. Strobel argues at length that Ps. 114 and 115 (LXX) form the

¹See above p. 135.

²See especially these articles: Dibelius, "Gethsemane," pp. 254-265; O. Linton, "Hebréerbrevet," pp. 335-345; Strobel, "Psalmengrundlage," pp. 252-266; Brandenburger, "Text und Vorlagen," pp. 210ff.; Boman, "Gebetskampf," pp. 261-273; Friedrich, "Das Lied," pp. 110f.; Lescow, "Jesus in Gethsemane," pp. 235ff.; Rissi, "Menschlichkeit," pp. 37ff.; Thuren, "Gebet und Gehorsam," pp. 142ff.; also these commentaries: Bleek, Hebräer II2, pp. 73f.; F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, pp. 100f.; Buchanan, Hebrews, pp. 97f.; Delitzsch, Hebrews, I, p. 243; Michel, Hebräer (1975), p. 221; Moffatt, Hebrews, p. 65; Montefiore, Hebrews, p. 97; Strathmann, Hebräer, p. 95; Windisch, Hebräerbrief, pp. 43f.

³Dibelius, "Gethsemane," p. 257.

peculiar background for Hebrews' reference to Jesus' struggle in prayer.¹ Strobel lists in detail the terminological parallels between Ps. 114/115 and Hb. 5:7-10,² arguing throughout for the "direct dependence" of Hebrews upon this image in Ps. 114/115 of the praying man of God. Strobel concludes:

Hbr in seiner Darlegung cp 5:7 unmittelbar von diesem alttestamentlichen Gebet abhängig ist. . . . So wie die Evangelisten in heiliger, anbetender Scheu für das Gebet Jesu in Gethsemane das Schriftwort des Psalters übernehmen . . . , so auch der Verfasser des Hebräerbriefes: er gründet auf Ps. 114/115.³

However, the parallels adduced by Strobel and Dibelius are less than precise and difficult to maintain.⁴ The argument for a "direct dependence" seems to go too far. In fact, other interpreters have over the years drawn attention to many other Psalms which also provide partial parallels to Hb. 5:7 in the train of thought and terminology. In addition to those already mentioned (Ps. 30:23; 38:13; 114/115), these Psalms should also be noted: Ps. 21:3,6,9,16,22,25⁵

¹Strobel, "Psalmengrundlage," pp. 252-266; also Buchanan, Hebrews, pp. 97f.

²Ibid., p. 256.

³Ibid., pp. 265f.

⁴In Hb. 5:7 εὐλαβεῖα probably does not mean 'fear' or 'anxiety,' rather it connotes 'godly fear' or 'reverence.' Therefore, ἔκστασις hardly parallels εὐλαβεῖα (against Strobel, "psalmengrundlage," p. 256 and Dibelius, "Gethsemane," p. 257). Neither Strobel nor Dibelius offer any Psalm parallels for the phrase μετὰ κραυγῆς ἰσχυρᾶς. Furthermore, other parallels with Hb. 5:7-10 identified by Strobel and Dibelius may be explained equally well with parallels from other Psalms and even from parallels in Hellenistic-Jewish literature (see pp. 159-163). Note especially the critique of Dibelius in Friedrich, "Das Lied," pp. 95ff.

⁵Ps. 21 LXX is often considered a significant parallel (F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, pp. 100f.; Windisch, Hebräerbrief, pp. 43f.; Strathmann, Hebräer, p. 95; et al.). The author of Hebrews has already revealed his familiarity with the Psalm by quoting Ps. 21:23 LXX in Hb. 2:12.

(Ps. 21:23 = Hb. 2:12); 68:1-3;¹ 117:66-68,71,107f.² While we may not overlook the significance of Ps. 114/115 or Ps. 30;23 and 38:13 as parallels for Hb. 5:7, the number of other Psalms which also provide possible parallels to Hb. 5:7 makes it unlikely that Hebrews was dependent on any one Psalm in particular.³ More likely the author was quite familiar with a whole range of Psalms, his writing therefore reflecting his own familiarity with the particular prayer terminology of the Psalms as a whole. F. Bleek writes in his massive commentary on Hebrews:

Sehr wahrscheinlich ist aber, . . . dass der Verfasser zugleich einzelne auf den Messias bezogene Psalm-Stellen vor Augen gehabt, und deren Berücksichtigung auf seinen Ausdruck in diesen Gliedern einigen Einfluss geübt hat.⁴

More recently T. Boman also writes that "es sich in Hb. v.7 nicht eine direkt Abhängigkeit, sondern um eine allgemeine Ähnlichkeit mit dem Klagepsalm handelt."⁵

Though the influence of the Psalms upon Hebrews' terminology here seems likely, we may not point to any one Psalm exclusively,

¹Noted by Michel, Hebräer (1975), p. 221; Rissi, "Menschlichkeit," p. 37; F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 100 n. 54; et al.

²Thurén, "Gebet und Gehorsam," p. 143, also mentions Ps. 54:3, 17ff., 20, 23. He suggests Ps. 117 specifically as a good example of a passage which combines a 'tapeinosis' motif with the call for divine aid and the learning of obedience.

³Linton, "Hebräerbrevet," pp. 335-345, argues that Hb. 5:7 likely drew not on a pair of verses from the Psalms (Dibelius) or a single Psalm (Strobel), but upon a commonly used scheme concerning the struggle of the psalmist--a righteous man--in prayer during a time of severe danger and stress. Cf. Bleek, Hebräer II2, p. 73; Bowman, "Gebetskampf," p. 266; Lescow, "Gethsemane," pp. 236f.; Loader, Sohn und Hohepriester, pp. 105f.; Thurén, "Gebet und Gehorsam," p. 143.

⁴Bleek, Hebräer II2, p. 73. Against Delitzsch, Hebrews I, p. 243, who considers the idea that "the Psalms of the passion were floating in the author's mind at the time" as unnecessary.

⁵Bowman, "Gebetskampf," p. 266.

nor may we look to the Psalms alone as the background for the language of Hb. 5:7ff.¹

C. Hellenistic-Judaism

L. K. K. Dey² and H. W. Attridge³ have drawn attention to the possible influence of a Hellenistic-Jewish prayer tradition on the thought and language of Hb. 5:7. After arguing for the translation "heard because of his reverence" (εἰσακουσθεὶς ἀπὸ τῆς εὐλαβείας) in Hb. 5:7 Attridge sees insurmountable difficulties in aligning Hb. 5:7 with the Gethsemane incident in the gospels. For Attridge Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane was not answered, the Gethsemane story does not provide the context for understanding Jesus' εὐλαβεία , nor does it indicate the content of his prayers.⁴ Attridge sees the best context for understanding Hb. 5:7 in the pattern of an ideal prayer of a holy and pious man in Hellenistic-Judaism. He adduces a passage in Philo, Quis Heres 1-29, as a better framework for understanding Hb. 5:7 than the Gethsemane story. Philo there comments on the characteristics of the prayer of Abraham and Moses, characteristics which Attridge concludes are precisely those which appear in the context of Hb. 5:7.⁵

¹For example, the phrase ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ was a common expression employed by Hebrews here to indicate Jesus' earthly lifetime (see above p.135 n.1). The petitioner's offering up of prayers and "being heard" by God was common terminology of prayer in the Psalms (e.g., Ps. 27:2, 6; 39:2; 60:2; 65:19; 105:44; 129:2; 140:1 LXX).

²Dey, Patterns of Perfection, pp. 224f., refers to 3 Macc. (1:16; 5:7, 25) and Philo (Qu. in Gen. 4. 233; Quod Deus 115) as proof that the language of Hb. 5:7 had its origins in the tradition of Hellenistic-Jewish prayer.

³Attridge, "Reverence," pp. 90-93.

⁴Ibid., p. 91.

⁵Ibid., pp. 92f. Quis Heres 1-29 is a Philonic digression on the boldness of Abraham in addressing God. Philo especially notes the "bold frankness" of the prayer, and goes further to give the

D. An Early Christian Hymn (?)

Repeatedly scholars have attempted to discern and reconstruct a Christ-hymn which allegedly lies beneath the present passage Hb. 5:7-10. The attempts of G. Schille¹ and G. Friedrich² are the most noteworthy.³ But however interesting the possibility and imaginative the reconstruction of an original Christ-hymn, the conjecture of a hymn here in Hb. 5:7-10 remains only an hypothesis.⁴ The various

characteristics of the frank prayer. In Heres 7, 14, 19, 22 Philo speaks of the loudness of the speech (as in the "mighty cry" of Hb. 5:7?--see above p.138); note also Heres 19 where intense emotion is linked with the prayer; especially note the reverential attitude of Abraham (Heres 22; Hb. 5:7, εὐλαβεία). Attridge comments: "Jesus, like Abraham, prayed with a loud shout, and like Moses, manifested genuine emotion. The boldness in all their prayers, however, was tempered by a humble recognition of divine sovereignty, a 'religious awe' or 'reference' that guaranteed that the prayers would be heard" (p. 93).

¹Schille, "Erwägungen," pp. 81-109. Schille reconstructs a hymn in Hb. 5:5, 7-10 which, after deleting all of v.6, ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ (v.7) and πᾶσιν τοῖς ὑπακούουσιν αὐτῷ (v.9), consisted of a thematic line (v.5a) followed by four strophes with three lines each (vv.5b, 7-10). See esp. pp. 97ff.

²Friedrich, "Das Lied," pp. 95-115. After a critique of Schille's reconstructed hymn in Hb. 5:5, 7-10, Friedrich argues for and proposes his own reconstruction of the original form of the Christ-hymn in Hb. 5:7-10:

- I. welcher Bitten und Flehen
zu dem, der ihn aus dem Tode retten konnte
mit starkem Geschrei und Tränen darbrachte,
- II. und er wurde auf Grund seiner Gottesfurcht erhört
und vollendet wurde er Urheber ewigen Heils,
ernannt von Gott zum Hohenpriester. (p. 109)

The first strophe--active voice--concerns Jesus as the earthly-one, while the second--passive voice--concerns Jesus as the exalted-one. Friedrich specially notes the similarity of Hb. 5:7-10 to the Christ-hymn in Phil. 2:6-11 (especially in the pattern of humiliation, exaltation, enthronement) and further argues that Hb. 5:7-10 in its original setting, like Phil. 2:6-11, had a baptismal context (pp. 102ff.; further on the baptismal context for Hb. 5:7ff. see Braumann, "Hebr. 5:7-10," pp. 278-280).

³See also Lescow, "Gethsemane," pp. 229ff.; Brandenburger, "Text und Vorlagen," pp. 197ff. (hymn only in vv.8-10); H. Zimmermann, Das Bekenntnis der Hoffnung, pp. 60-79.

⁴See Grässer, "Jesus," pp. 77f. and Loader, Sohn und Hohepriester, pp. 107f. The strongest argument against the hymnic char-

arguments marshalled in favour of a hymn behind Hb. 5:7-10 seem inconclusive.¹ That elements from earlier traditions exist here is undeniable, but the postulation of a hymn here remains unnecessary to explain these elements.

E. The Gospel Tradition--Gethsemane

Surely in light of Hebrews' concern to establish irrefutably Jesus' genuine humanity, reference to Jesus' history was foundational. His humanity and sympathy with the earthly difficulties of his people could hardly be proven if the ultimate point of reference was a tradition about the ideal prayer of a pious man or even if that point of reference was scripture itself (OT Psalms). Only reference to

acter of Hb. 5:7-10 comes from R. Deichgräber, Gottes hymnus und Christushymnus in der frühen Christenheit (Göttingen, 1967), pp. 174ff. Deichgräber argues strongly for the prose character of Hb. 5:7-10 and concludes: "Es ist völlig unmöglich, diesen Prosasatz in Verszeilen zu Gliedern. Danach dürfte es ausgeschlossen sein, dass in Hb. 5:5-10 ein Christushymnus vorliegt" (p. 175).

¹Those who perceive a Christ-hymn in Hb. 5:5-10 point to various hymnic features in this passage. (a) The peculiar language in this passage. Words such as δέσις, ἱκετηρία, εἰσακούω, ἄγιος, προσαγορεύω, only occur here in Hebrews; also certain words, such as σώζειν, θάνατος, προσφέρειν, εὐλαβεία, and τελειῶ, are said to be used here differently than elsewhere in Hebrews. Yet the uniqueness of the topic and the influence of the prayer tradition in the Psalms and in Hellenistic-Jewish literature could well account for the peculiarity of the language here in Hebrews. (b) The "Arktikellosigkeit" of certain substantives. Usually δεήσεις, ἱκετηρίας, θάνατος, κραυγῆς, and δακρύων are noted. But what of ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ (v.7) and τοῖς ὑπακούουσιν αὐτῷ (v.9)? (c) The doubling of substantives (δεήσεις / ἱκετηρίας; κραυγῆς / δακρύων). Yet such doubling of substantives is hardly limited to poetic/hymnic style; it seems common enough elaborative style in prose. (d) The abrupt relative ὅς (v.7) is said to be a characteristic beginning for early Christian hymns (cf. Phil. 2:6; Col. 1:15, 18; Hb. 1:3; 12:2; 1 Tim. 3:16; 1 Pt. 2:22). Yet, as Deichgräber states: "nicht hinter jedem ὅς steckt ein Hymnus" (Gottes hymnus, p. 175 n.1). The admittedly abrupt ὅς makes a clear break between vv.5-6 and vv.7-10, yet this is natural enough in that vv.7-10 take up a different point from vv.5-6. (e) The frequent usage of participles is also claimed as stylistic evidence for a hymn. Yet this feature may also be understood as characteristic of Hebrews' more elaborative writing style.

Jesus' history as a man could suffice to prove his authentic humanity and sympathy. We must ask now then whether any occasion in Jesus' life recounted in the gospel tradition could have provided the background for this allusion to Jesus' prayer struggle in Hb. 5:7.

In the gospel tradition the only possibility is Jesus' prayer for himself in the garden of Gethsemane (Mk. 14:32-42; Mtt. 26:36-46; Lk. 22:39-46; also Jn. 12:27f.¹), a possibility which most interpreters of Hb. 5:7f. have at least mentioned. O. Cullmann, for example, writes of Hb. 5:7f.: "It still seems to me by far the most probable explanation of this passage that it is a reference to Gethsemane."² But before we draw our own conclusions on this matter, we must examine the relationship between Hb. 5:7f. and the Gethsemane tradition in the gospels.

1. Prayer vis-a-vis Death. According to Hb. 5:7 Jesus offers up his prayer and supplications πρὸς τὸν δυνάμενον σώζειν αὐτὸν ἐκ θανάτου. As argued above, this description of the one to whom Jesus prayed--God--suggests further the essential content of Jesus' prayer.³ Facing the prospect of his own death Jesus beseeches God for deliverance from death (σώζειν αὐτὸν ἐκ θανάτου). As noted above, in Hebrews the precise sense of Jesus' prayer is uncertain.⁴ But however ambiguous the precise sense of Jesus' prayer, the basic features are

¹It is generally accepted that John 12:27f. is the closest John comes to supplying a counterpart to the Gethsemane pericope of the synoptics, although the Johannine context is clearly quite different (a public, not private, setting). See C. K. Barrett, The Gospel According to St. John, 2nd ed. (London, 1978), pp. 424f.; R. Bultmann, The Gospel of John: A Commentary, trans. G. R. Beasley-Murray (Oxford, 1971), p. 428 n. 1.

²Cullmann, Christology, p. 96.

³See above p. 136.

⁴Ibid.

clear: Jesus pleaded with God for deliverance from death.

But what of such a prayer in the gospel tradition?¹ In Gethsemane Jesus prays to God: "Remove this cup from me" (παρένεγκε τὸ ποτήριον τοῦτο ἀπ' ἐμοῦ, Mk. 14:36; Lk. 22:42; παρελθάτω ἀπ' ἐμοῦ τὸ ποτήριον τοῦτο, Mtt. 26:39; cf. Mtt. 26:42). He also pleads: "Save me from this hour" (Jn. 12:27, σῶσόν με ἐκ τῆς ὥρας ταύτης; cf. Mk. 14:35), an "hour" which did not go away, but came (ἦλθεν ἡ ὥρα, Mk. 14:41; ἤγγικεν ἡ ὥρα, Mtt. 26:45). Whatever the richness of connotation suggested by the "cup" and the "hour,"² they must refer to Jesus' death. Thus in every strand of the gospel tradition, including John, there is preserved an account of Jesus praying for his own deliverance from death, although--as in Hb. 5:7--nowhere does the precise meaning of the prayer become clear.

We see therefore a general similarity between Hb. 5:7 and the gospel tradition concerning the content of Jesus' prayer. Though there are no direct linguistic links, Jesus' prayer for deliverance from death--whatever that means precisely--is a regular feature in all strands of the Gethsemane tradition in the gospels, a feature which also occurs here in Hb. 5:7.

2. Jesus' Struggle in Prayer. Hebrews specially emphasizes the passion with which Jesus offered up his prayers to God--μετὰ κραυγῆς ἰσχυρᾶς καὶ δακρύων.³ The reference to strong crying and

¹See K. G. Kuhn, "Jesus in Gethsemane," EvTh 12 (1952-53), pp. 260-285; also R. Barbour, "Gethsemane in the Tradition of the Passion," NTS 16 (1969-70), pp. 231-251.

²The words ποτήριον and ὥρα do not occur in Hb. 5:7, though the brief summary nature of the allusion to the content of Jesus' prayer in Hb. 5:7--occurring as it does in a paraphrase for God--might explain this absence.

³See above p. 138.

tears draws particular attention to his weakness and anxiety in the face of death--in a word, to his full humanity.

Mark and Matthew both record that, while in Gethsemane praying, Jesus was greatly distressed (ἤρξατο ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι καὶ ἀδημονεῖν, Mk. 14:33; ἤρξατο λυπεῖσθαι καὶ ἀδημονεῖν, Mtt. 26:37) and uttered the words: Περίλυπός ἐστιν ἡ ψυχὴ μου ἕως θανάτου (Mk. 14:34; Mtt. 26:38). In the fourth gospel also the evangelist points to Jesus' troubled state of mind: Νῦν ἡ ψυχὴ μου τετάρακται (Jn. 12:27). But the disputed verses of Luke's Gethsemane account most vividly emphasize Jesus' personal anguish in his prayer: καὶ γενόμενος ἐν ἀγωνίᾳ ἐκτενέστερον προσηύχετο ; καὶ ἐγένετο ὁ ἰδρῶς αὐτοῦ ὥσει θρόμβοι αἵματος καταβαίνοντος ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν. (Lk. 22:44). Thus every strand of the Gethsemane tradition in the gospels, especially the Lucan, takes note of Jesus' personal anguish and agonizing in prayer.

Then, as in all strands of the Gethsemane tradition, Hb. 5:7 also portrays Jesus facing the "hour" of his death--the Johannine 'now' of decision--with distinctly human distress and anxiety, passionately pouring out his soul in prayer to God for deliverance from death. Indeed, here Hebrews most closely corresponds to the Lucan version, albeit the disputed verses. Both Luke and Hebrews underscore the passion aspect of Jesus' prayer.

Furthermore the gospel passages which speak of Jesus' passion in Gethsemane have a paraenetic function, occurring in the paraenetic section according to Kuhn's analysis.¹ A similar paraenetic orientation is evident in Hb. 5:7ff.

¹Kuhn, "Gethsemane," pp. 260-285, isolates two sources in the Marcan Gethsemane account: 'A'--where the emphasis is christological and eschatological (Mk. 14:32, 35, 40, 41), and 'B'--where the emphasis is paraenetic (14:33, 34, 36, 37, 38). According to Kuhn, Matthew essentially follows on Mark. Luke, however, has utilized a different tradition in which the paraenetic scope if anything is even

It has been argued that Hebrews drew this passion aspect from an exegesis of a LXX Psalm, e.g., Ps. 21 (LXX), or from a Hellenistic-Jewish prayer tradition.¹ However, the presence at every level of the gospel tradition of Jesus' agony and passionate prayer entreaty in Gethsemane suggests that Hebrews likely drew here on an already existent early Christian tradition about Jesus' life--namely the Gethsemane incident or a like occasion when Jesus prayed toward the closing period of his ministry--and did not simply supply this detail and others about Jesus' prayer from a creative application of a prayer tradition in the LXX Psalms or Hellenistic-Judaism.

3. Jesus and God's Will. In our discussion above we have shown that εὐλαβεία in Hb. 5:7 means "reverence" or "godly fear," an attitude characterized by a supremely careful regard for one's relation to God and His will.² Such an attitude, Hebrews asserts, was the reason Jesus' prayer was "heard" (εἰσακουσθεῖς).³

Similarly, the supreme regard of Jesus for God and His will is manifest in the Gethsemane tradition of the gospels as well. In the synoptics Jesus' prayer for deliverance from the approaching "hour" is distinctively set in the context of His deference to God's will:

Πάτερ , εἰ βούλει . . . πλὴν μὴ τὸ θέλημά μου ἀλλὰ τὸ σὸν γινέσθω
(Lk. 22:42; cf. Mk. 14:36; Mtt. 26:39, 42).⁴ The conceptual similarity between εὐλαβεία in Hb. 5:7 and these words of Jesus in the synoptics

greater. Barbour, "Gethsemane," pp. 238ff., notes the prominence of the 'martyr theme' in Luke's account, further stressing Luke's paraenetic intentions.

¹See above pp. 164-167.

²See above pp. 139ff.

³See above pp. 142f.

⁴Mk. 14:36 reads, Ἀββὰ ὁ πατήρ , πάντα δυνατὰ σοι . . . ἀλλ' οὐ τί ἐγὼ θέλω ἀλλὰ τί σὺ . Mt. 26:39 reads, Πάτερ μου , εἰ δυνατόν ἐστιν , . . . πλὴν οὐχ ὥς ἐγὼ θέλω ἀλλ' ὥς σὺ (cf. v.42).

seems clear.¹ Even in Jn. 12:27f. Jesus' response to God, πάτερ , δόξασόν σου τὸ ὄνομα (v.28), may be understood as a radicalization of Jesus' submission to God's will as given in the synoptics, ἀλλ οὐ τί ἐγὼ θέλω ἀλλὰ τί σύ (Mk. 14:36).

Thus Hb. 5:7 and the Gethsemane tradition of the gospels correspond in that both consider Jesus' regard for God's will as a distinctive feature in his prayer for deliverance from death.

4. The Answer to Prayer. As noted above, Hebrews' assertion that Jesus' prayer for deliverance from death was "heard," i.e., positively answered, has proven problematic to interpreters.² But regardless of the precise connotation of εἰσακουσθεῖς in Hb. 5:7, it is clear in Hebrews that physical suffering and death still lay ahead for Jesus (5:8).³ Indeed, according to Hebrews Jesus' earthly way of suffering and death was the divinely intended means whereby Jesus became the source of salvation for the many sons (2:9f.; 5:9) and was designated their high priest (2:17f.; 5:10).⁴

Mark and Matthew conclude their accounts of the Gethsemane episode with Jesus' observation: ἦλθεν ἡ ὥρα , ἰδοὺ παραδίδοται ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου εἰς τὰς χεῖρας τῶν ἁμαρτωλῶν. (Mk. 14:41; Mtt. 26:45).⁵ In the disputed verse 43 of Luke 22 the evangelist records that Jesus was strengthened by an angel from heaven (ᾤφθη δὲ αὐτῷ ἄγγελος

¹It has been said with some justification that Jesus' words "not my will but thine be done" provide the clearest comment on εὐλαβεία in Hb. 5:7 possible.

²See above pp. 139ff.

³In 5:8 the author immediately proceeds to speak of Jesus' suffering and death.

⁴See 2:9, 10, 17f.; 4:14f.

⁵Matthew differs from Mark here only in the use of the verb ἡγγικεν instead of ἦλθεν ; Matthew also shifts ἰδοὺ to the front of the statement.

ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ ἐνισχύων αὐτόν , Lk. 22:43), the implication here being that such strength was needed in order to face earthly temptation and suffering still to come.¹ Then too, the synoptists all recount the betrayal and passion of the Son of man Jesus immediately following their account of Gethsemane. Even in Jn. 12:27ff., where the context is wholly different from that of the synoptics, Jesus immediately begins to speak of the Son of man "lifted up from the earth" (δεῖ ὑψωθῆναι τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου , 12:32-34), that is to say the death of the Son of man. For John, Jesus' prayer that God be glorified (12:28) is answered, as Bultmann says, in the Son taking on himself earthly existence in its utter depth, obeying the will of God to the very end.² Thus when Jesus prays for deliverance from death, to have the "cup" or "hour" pass away from him, each of the gospels in their

¹We have already shown above that the strengthening to face death was scarcely the positive answer to Jesus' prayer to be delivered from death (p.143). Jesus' strengthening by the angel in Luke points to the severe testing still facing Jesus in the future. The mention of the angelic strengthening draws attention to the dominant paraenetic tone of Luke's account of the Gethsemane incident. M. Dibelius, "Gethsemane," pp. 260ff., points to the strong martyr motif in the Lucan Gethsemane story. Jesus, the martyr, experiences human suffering on the path to death, yet conquers it through his attitude of submission to God's will. "Alone in the presence of God he wages his battle, the battle of the martyr in the pangs of death. The sole heightening of the scene lies in this battle in prayer. This we fail to appreciate if we see in the appearance of the angel God's help which decides the contest. On the contrary, it is not until the angel appears that the battle becomes intense. The angel is to prepare the praying Jesus for this. And this stage of the battle is designated ἀγωνία " (p. 264). H. Conzelmann, The Theology of St. Luke, trans. G. Buswell (London, 1960), p. 200 n. 2, notes that the main difference between the account of the Passion and that of a martyrdom is that in Jesus' Passion his suffering is according to plan. Conzelmann further senses a tension between Luke's narrative and dialogue over this martyr motif.

²Bultmann, John, p. 428; cf. Barrett, John, p. 425. Jeremias, "Hebr. 5:7-10," pp. 109f., links Hb. 5:7 to Jn. 12:27f. by taking the prayer of Jesus in John (δοξασόν σου τὸ ὄνομα) that God would glorify His name to mean Jesus' resurrection or exaltation. Rissi, "Menschlichkeit," p. 39, rejects Jeremias' interpretation here since the gospel of John sees Jesus as "glorified" not first in his resurrection, but already in his Passion.

way distinctly points to the fact that the bitter "hour" had indeed come, that suffering and death was now the way ahead for Jesus.

Though the problem concerning the divine response to Jesus' prayer yet remains, we can nevertheless underline a significant correspondence here between Hb. 5:7 and the Gethsemane tradition of the gospels. In both Hebrews and the gospels, subsequent to Jesus' prayer for deliverance from death, a prayer set in the context of Jesus' attitude of submission to God's will, Jesus is set on the way of suffering, the way of the cross, the way of the ultimate act of obedience and godly fear. This, according to John, was the way of the Father's glorification. And however paradoxical, this was at least part of the way in which Jesus' prayer was "heard."

5. "Peirasmos," Obedience and Paraenesis. Though the word $\piειράζω$ / $\piειρασμός$ itself does not occur in Hb. 5:7ff.,¹ it seems clear that the author here regarded the incident of Jesus' struggle in prayer as a "peirasmos." The previous connexion of Jesus' suffering with his temptation (2:18; 4:15),² a connexion made applicable here in the adverbial clause $\alphaφ' \omegaν \epsilonπαθεν$ (5:8), and the statement that Jesus "learned obedience"³ through what he suffered strongly suggest a "peirasmos" motif here. For the statement that Jesus "learned

¹Cf. 2:18 and 4:15 in reference to Jesus; also note 3:8, 9; 11:17 (37).

²See above p.155. Elsewhere the NT also links 'suffering' and 'temptation.' 1 Pt. 4:12-13 connects $\piειρασμός$ with $\πάθημα$ (see W. Michaelis, " $\πάσχω$," pp. 930ff.). $\θλίβω$ (synonymous with $\πάθημα$) and $\piειράζω$ are also closely related elsewhere where suffering provides the means of testing or temptation (e.g., Hb. 11:37; Rev. 2:10; 1 Th. 3:3-5).

³Jesus' sinlessness (4:15) and obedience (5:8) are the same reality seen from different perspectives. They indicate the common active response of Jesus to 'temptation' (4:15) and 'suffering' (5:8). Clearly then 'temptation' and 'suffering' are closely connected in Hebrews' thought.

obedience" to be meaningful in any sense requires a situation in which Jesus had an open choice between disobedience and obedience to God's will. For without temptation obedience would be no more than just a form of words.¹

Hebrews also understood obedience to be required of those who would inherit eternal salvation-- τοῖς ὑπακούουσιν αὐτῷ (5:9).² Thus Hb. 5:7ff. also points by implication to the 'peirasmos' of Christians who, like Jesus, must "learn obedience" through suffering. The sober paraenetic tone of warning, and also encouragement, is clearly sounded in this passage. Hebrews here holds out to his Christian readers suffering "peirasmos" the example and support of Jesus, one who as a man endured suffering and temptation and yet emerged victorious over all by obeying God's will to the end.

Unlike Hb. 5:7ff., the Gethsemane tradition of the synoptics does use the word πειρασμός . It does so in Jesus' exhortation to his disciples, γρηγορεῖτε καὶ προσεύχεσθε , ἵνα μὴ ἔλθητε εἰς πειρασμόν , τὸ μὲν πνεῦμα πρόθυμον ἡ δὲ σὰρξ ἀσθενής (Mk. 14:38; Mtt. 26:41). Indeed, Luke includes Jesus' exhortation twice, neatly forming a framework for his account of Jesus' prayer struggle on the Mount of Olives (Lk. 22:40, 46). The paraenetic intent of the evangelists here would appear clear. The disciples are not to "succumb to temptation"³ (εἰσελθεῖν εἰς πειρασμόν), but to repulse Satan through prayer and watchfulness and attain victory through obedience.

But should the Gethsemane incident in the gospels be understood as a "peirasmos" for Jesus as well?⁴ Admittedly the reference

¹See the argument of R. Barbour, "Gethsemane," pp. 242-248.

²See above p. 159.

³See below p. 178.

⁴The gospel of Luke is particularly interesting at this point. Hans Conzelmann, The Theology of St. Luke, pp. 79ff. and 199ff., in

to "peirasmos" in the synoptics is directed specifically at the disciples, not Jesus. Yet it seems probable to us that Jesus' words of exhortation were spoken out of the context of his own present experience of "peirasmos"--a battle which he wins through earnest prayer and devotion to God's will. We may not within the scope of our present study fully analyse all the difficult issues at stake here in the gospel tradition. However, the emphasis in every strand of the gospel tradition upon the obedience of Jesus in Gethsemane--"Not my will, but thine be done"--is decisive for us. Jesus' decision to obey God is only meaningful in light of genuine pressure to do otherwise, to disobey. In other words, the strong emphasis on Jesus' voluntary obedience necessarily implies a testing or temptation in which another path could have been taken.¹ Therefore, it seems likely that the Gethsemane incident in the gospels did have a "peirasmos" character--both for the disciples and Jesus himself.

particular is responsible for drawing special attention to the re-emergence of the character of Satan in Luke 22 (note esp. vv.3, 28, 31ff., 40, 46). Conzelmann has stressed the consequent 'peirasmos' character of this chapter, especially the incident on the Mount of Olives--a "peirasmos" situation for both the disciples and Jesus (cf. H. Seesemann, "πειρασμοί," TDNT VI, pp. 31ff.; Barbour, "Gethsemane," pp. 242-248). However, Conzelmann's interpretation has not gone unchallenged. Schuyler Brown, Apostasy and Perseverance in the Theology of Luke (Rome, 1969), argues at length that Luke does not understand anything after the so-called wilderness temptation (Lk. 4:1-13) as a 'peirasmos' of Jesus. Lk. 4:13 marks an absolute end to Jesus' temptation, Jesus' fundamental obedience is no longer challenged by Satan (pp. 16ff.). In his Passion Jesus does not face 'peirasmos,' but a direct Satanic assault, an attempt to destroy him. For Luke, 'peirasmos' and suffering are two distinct Satanic strategems, both designed to frustrate the purposes of God; they are not directly connected. But it is hard to accept Brown's fundamental thesis that πειρασμός in Luke virtually means "apostasy" (pp. 15ff.) (after 4:13). In Lk. 22:40, 46 the phrase εἰσελθεῖν εἰς πειρασμόν most likely means "succumb to temptation," not simply "be tempted" or "experience temptation" (see I. H. Marshall, Gospel of Luke, pp. 461f.; cf. Lk. 11:4, μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς εἰς πειρασμόν).

¹The gospel writers do not however, reflect on this possibility; they are preoccupied with their proclamation of the fact that Jesus carried out God's will and plan of salvation for mankind.

Thus in both Hebrews and the gospels Jesus' prayer struggle was seen in the context of "peirasmos," both of Jesus and the disciples. Both also emphasize Jesus' decision to obey God's will. Furthermore, the "peirasmos" element in both is directed toward paraenesis; their common objective is to warn, support and encourage their Christian readers by holding up the example of Jesus.

6. Christology. The establishment of Jesus' authentic humanity was a crucial point for Hebrews' high priest christology, the effective proof of Jesus' ability to sympathize with his people as their high priest. Thus Hebrews has drawn upon this dramatic episode in Jesus' earthly life primarily in order to illustrate the reality of Jesus' humanity.

The establishment of Jesus' humanity however was not the point of the synoptic Gethsemane accounts, nor of the relevant Johannine passage. Rather, as M. Dibelius stated,¹ the Gethsemane story is told to honour Jesus, to point to the Son of man obediently carrying out his divinely instituted task of salvation by suffering.

7. Hb. 5:7f. and the Gethsemane Tradition. What then can we conclude concerning the relationship of the Gethsemane tradition of the gospels to the Hb. 5:7f. passage? First of all, we have been unable to draw clear direct links between Gethsemane and Hb. 5:7f. Hebrews' eyes are focused only on Jesus and therefore details like the geographical setting and the disciples who accompanied Jesus are lacking. Neither has Hebrews utilized any of the characteristic words or expressions associated with the Gethsemane tradition. We may not therefore say that it is proven beyond all doubt that Hebrews has drawn on the Gethsemane tradition for his picture of Jesus in 5:7f.

¹Dibelius, "Gethsemane," pp. 257f.

Nevertheless, within the gospel narratives we now possess Gethsemane remains the only possible parallel to the picture of Jesus in Hb. 5:7f. As shown above, there is a sufficiently close conceptual relationship between Hb. 5:7f. and the Gethsemane tradition to justify the opinion that Hebrews likely did have such an incident in mind. It would be perfectly understandable that Hebrews utilized only those features of the Gethsemane story that proved relevant to his purpose, in a summarizing fashion adapting its characteristic features to his argument. Yet the possibility should also be at least mentioned that Hebrews had access to an independent tradition dealing with Jesus' prayer concerning his death and deliverance from it. But, on the basis of the available evidence we can say that Hebrews likely had the Gethsemane story--or one very much like it--in mind. As F. F. Bruce has written: "Gethsemane seems to offer the most telling illustration of these words."¹

It seems unlikely however that the frame of reference of 5:8 (ἐμαθεν ἀφ' ὧν ἔπαθεν τὴν ὑπακοήν) can be limited to the Gethsemane incident.² It is almost certain that the connexion of "suffering" and "obedience" here does point to Jesus' death--though not necessarily only his death. What then is the historical frame of reference for Hb. 5:8? Our understanding of Hb. 5:7 is critical here. We believe that 5:7 does refer to a specific incident in Jesus' life when he prayed facing his own imminent persecution and death, not as M. Rissi

¹F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 98. Bruce quotes here from A. E. Garvie, "The Pioneer of Faith and of Salvation," ExT 26 (1914-15), p. 549. Bruce further quotes Garvie (p. 98 n. 44): "While we must not limit the reference to Gethsemane, yet there this element in the passion is most clearly and fully presented to us."

²See Michaelis, "πρόσω," pp. 917f. Michaelis does accept Hb. 5:7 as an allusion to Gethsemane, though not 5:8. However, we see no convincing reason to limit the reference of 5:8 solely to Jesus' death, as Michaelis does.

argues,¹ to reflections of the author of Hebrews on the prayer life of Jesus during his whole earthly life. Hebrews' portrayal of Jesus praying with such intense passion concerning his death points to the imminence of that horrific prospect. This then would support looking to a particular event² such as Gethsemane, where facing the real prospect of his own death Jesus anxiously petitions God for deliverance. Then given this reference point in v.7 and the close connexion of v.8 to v.7, it seems likely that 5:8 refers to Jesus' passion and his obedience to God throughout the closing stages of his life climaxing in his death on the cross.³ Thus Hb. 5:7-8 reflects the order of the Passion history: prayer, suffering and death.

F. Background Summary

We have considered a number of factors which may lie in the background of Hebrews' portrayal of Jesus in 5:7ff.

The μάθος/πάθος word play in v.8 indicates Hebrews' awareness of a 'paideia' tradition and reveals the likely influence of Jewish martyrological ideas on Hebrews' interpretation of Jesus' suffering.

The LXX Psalms are well known to the author of Hebrews, as their frequent and significant use in the epistle witnesses, and

¹Rissi, "Menschlichkeit," p. 39. Cf. Friedrich, "Das Lied," p. 110; Maurer, "Gottesfurcht," p. 283; Spicq, Hébreux II, p. 112. Though F. F. Bruce grants that Gethsemane is the most telling illustration of Hb. 5:7, he later suggests that 5:7 is a "more general reference to the whole course of our Lord's humiliation and passion" (Hebrews, p. 100).

²See Cullmann, Christology, p. 96; and P. E. Hughes, Hebrews, p. 182.

³Contra Rissi, "Menschlichkeit," p. 41, who concludes: "Hebr. 5:7-8 möchten wir also nicht nur auf die Gethsemanegeschichte beziehen, sondern auf den ganzen priesterlichen Leidensweg Jesu, bis hin zum Tod $\chi\omega\rho\iota\varsigma\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ (2:9)." We do not, however, exclude the possibility that, while 5:7 referred specifically to Gethsemane, 5:8 may have had a much larger field of reference for Hebrews, viz. Jesus' suffering and obedience throughout his whole life.

contain a prayer tradition which may well have exercised an influence on the language Hebrews utilizes to describe Jesus' prayer struggle in 5:7. So too the pattern of an ideal prayer by a holy and pious man-of-God as seen in Hellenistic-Judaism may have exerted some influence on Hebrews' presentation of Jesus' prayer.

But Hebrews' supreme concern to establish irrefutably the reality of Jesus' humanity strongly suggests that this passage is first and foremost what it appears to be, viz. a reference to the history of Jesus' life--or rather, to the picture of Jesus handed down to the author of Hebrews via apostolic traditions--, a reference to Jesus' human prayer struggle and passion. The Gethsemane tradition of the gospels offers the best example of such a tradition and it seems likely that the author of Hebrews knew a Gethsemane tradition--even though Hb. 5:7f. is identical with none of the existing accounts. In particular Hebrews and the Lucan account similarly stress the passion aspect of Jesus' prayer, a feature which certainly attracted Hebrews' attention to the Gethsemane incident in Jesus' life since it so clearly pointed toward his humanity. Therefore, we believe that Hebrews was primarily dependent on a historical tradition about Jesus here in Hb. 5:7-8, though the author was likely influenced by other relevant traditions in his presentation and interpretation of that historical tradition.

V. Significance of Jesus' Earthly Life

A. Christology: The Indispensability of Jesus' Earthly Life for the High Priest Christology of Hebrews

Already in 2:17f. briefly and more explicitly in 4:15 the author of Hebrews has emphasized the necessity of Jesus' full humanity for his high priestly ministry and office. But in 5:1-10 the author bears down more precisely on the issue of Jesus' legitimacy as a high

priest. In this passage he sets out the two fundamental requirements for the OT high priest: (a) his ability to sympathize with weak and erring people (5:1-3), and (b) his divine appointment (5:4). In chiastic order, Hebrews establishes the full qualification of Jesus as a high priest on both these counts. From scripture, Hebrews demonstrated Jesus' divine appointment (5:5-6; Ps. 2:7; 110:4). But in order to establish convincingly and indisputably Jesus' ability to sympathize with his human brethren, an appeal to Jesus' earthly life was absolutely indispensable. With this intention Hebrews draws his readers' attention to Jesus' prayer struggle and to his learning of obedience through suffering (5:7-8), proof positive of Jesus' qualification as a sympathetic high priest.

Hebrews' allusion to Jesus' prayer struggle was particularly pointed, for it associated with Jesus the commonplace human anxiety about death. Indeed, Hebrews strongly emphasizes the passion aspect of Jesus' prayer, alluding graphically to his anguish--"with strong crying and tears" (μετὰ κραυγῆς ἰσχυρᾶς καὶ δακρύων). Here Jesus is seen in his deepest humiliation, utterly dependent upon God. Here the reality of Jesus' experience of human weaknesses is brought vividly to expression. But perhaps most importantly this account of Jesus' prayer points toward the need Jesus had to pray and be heard. Nothing could have more powerfully substantiated Jesus' humanity and ability to sympathize than this reference to Jesus' anguished prayer.

Furthermore, that Jesus had to "learn obedience through what he suffered," i.e., actively obey God despite human suffering and temptation, firmly places him in the realm of human contingencies. Faced with temptation and suffering Jesus had to choose to obey God. That it could have been otherwise, that God allowed His Son to face a temptation to which he might have succumbed, points to the "astonishing

daring of God"¹ and the full sharing of Jesus in the very fabric of our human existence. Herein then is an incomparably radical statement of the Son's solidarity with the many sons in their human *Sitz-im-Leben*.

Therefore, we see that reference to Jesus' earthly life was indispensable to establish Jesus' humanity, his sympathy, and the legitimacy of his high priesthood. Such a qualification could not be automatic, given or inherited, but had to be gained in the course of a real human life faced with the same dilemmas, weaknesses and troubles that every man faced. Indeed, Jesus' earthly life lies at the foundation of Hebrews' high priest christology. It is, as U. Lück says, the "Ausgangspunkt" for his interpretation of Jesus as high priest.² And despite the apparent scandal involved,³ Hebrews glories in Jesus' humiliation because through his self-humiliation in a life of weakness, temptation, suffering and death came his perfection and exaltation. Clearly we are in touch here with the primitive humiliation-exaltation kerygma of the early church. Because of his suffering and his obedience even unto death Jesus has become the "source of eternal salvation" (αἴτιος σωτηρίας αἰωνίου , 5:9) and has been designated by God "High Priest after the order of Melchizedek" (ἄρχιερεὺς κατὰ τὴν τάξιν Μελχισέδεκ, 5:6, 10).

Yet it should be noted that even here in this reference to Jesus' earthly life where the parallel between him and the OT high priest is most strongly felt, the comparison is burst open and the superiority of Jesus' high priesthood is established. For unlike the OT high priests, whose human weaknesses led to a disobedience and

¹Barbour, "Gethsemane," p. 247.

²Lück, "Himmlisches und irdisches Geschehen," p. 214.

³The possible sense of scandal is implied in the concessive clause καίπερ ὧν υἱός (5:8).

imperfection that necessitated a sacrifice for their own sins first (5:3), Jesus, faced with the same human weaknesses, temptation and suffering as the high priests, lived a life of complete obedience to the will of God (5:8; cf. 4:15). Thus the high priest Jesus breaks open the OT high priest mould. The superiority of Jesus' priesthood is confirmed in that Jesus becomes the source of an "eternal salvation" and is named a high priest "forever" (5:6, 10). Here then in Hebrews' typological presentation of Jesus' high priesthood we can see the characteristic dialectical tension, for even in the reference to Jesus' way as a man both continuity and discontinuity are present.

B. Paraenesis: Jesus' Earthly Life as the Foundation for Hebrews' Paraenesis

As elsewhere in Hebrews, we encounter the paraenetic orientation of the author of Hebrews in this passage. His christology of Jesus as high priest is a pastoral-christology for from it issues his call to obedience and perseverance. In the words $\pi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\iota\nu\ \tau\omicron\iota\varsigma\ \upsilon\pi\alpha\kappa\omicron\upsilon\sigma\iota\nu\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\hat{\omega}$ Hebrews apprises his readers of the conditional nature of salvation. Their obedience and steadfastness in faith is not optional, but required. Indeed, the strong note of warning in Hebrews' exhortation here points toward the seriousness of their situation. They were perhaps becoming weary and careless in their faithfulness to their confession, worn down by suffering and sorely tempted to compromise or even abandon their adherence to their confession of Christ. Thus the preacher of Hebrews issues his call for renewed obedience to Christ.

But what relevance did the high priest Jesus have to his people toiling on earth in a struggle to hold fast to their faith? It is precisely at this point that we see that for the pastorally concerned

author of Hebrews the high priest Jesus' earthly life was the foundation upon which his "word of exhortation" (13:22) was based.

1. Model. First Hebrews presents Jesus in his earthly way as a model for his readers to emulate. During his earthly days Jesus, like his people, was susceptible to human weaknesses and fears, struggling as a man with suffering and temptation. And it was Jesus' susceptibility to the problems connected with his flesh-and-blood-conditioned life that made his obedience to God relevant to readers now struggling with their own problems in relation to obedience. Jesus' example of voluntary obedience would therefore have been a source of great encouragement to Hebrews' readers. And Jesus' obedience resulting in his exaltation promised his people's exaltation as well if they obeyed him.¹ Hebrews here then presents a direct continuity between Jesus and his people in his faith response of obedience, although Hebrews makes it clear as well that for the Christian reader Jesus himself is not only a fellow participant in the way of obedience, but also has become the object of their obedience and loyalty (αὐτῷ, 5:9).

2. Priest. However, Hebrews presents Jesus not only as a pattern to be followed, but as the eschatological high priest whose intercession with God in heaven on the behalf of his people gives them comfort, hope and the confidence to approach the throne of grace for mercy and help in a time of need (cf. 4:16). The ability of the heavenly high priest Jesus to intercede effectively for his people is squarely based on his earthly experience as a man which guarantees his

¹See also Hb. 2:10 where the "pioneer of salvation" endures sufferings, even the suffering of death (2:9), and thereby is made perfect (τελειῶσαι) and crowned with glory and honour (δόξῃ καὶ τιμῇ ἐστεφανωμένον). This "pioneer of salvation" then leads "many sons to glory" (2:10), the very purpose of God and the ministry of His Son Jesus.

sympathy with their situation. Thus the earthly life of Jesus gains its fullest significance for Hebrews' readers when it is understood that that same Jesus who shared their weaknesses, temptations and suffering is now their great high priest in the very presence of God Himself.

C. Jesus in Hb. 5:7-8

Clearly the author of Hebrews has christological and paraenetic concerns in referring to the earthly life and experience of Jesus here in 5:7f.--as we have noted above. To be sure, the author of Hebrews displays no biographical concern for Jesus' earthly life. Furthermore, we have noted the possible influence of various traditions on Hebrews' portrayal of Jesus' earthly life and experience. However, we have suggested that this was primarily a stylistic and terminological influence. The core events recounted in Hb. 5:7-8 were almost certainly provided by the historical traditions about Jesus' life available to Hebrews, as in the Gethsemane tradition of the gospels. Indeed, no one argues for the total non-historicity of the picture of Jesus here in Hb. 5:7-8. E. Grässer, however,¹ suggests that for Hebrews, dominated by theological interests and heavily influenced by the LXX Psalms, only the "Dass" of Jesus' humanity and prayer struggle was needed to be known; the 'how' was supplied by the christologically interpreted LXX Psalms. Grässer then concludes that Hebrews took no particular interest in the life of Jesus,² only a soteriological interest. But if by this statement Grässer means that it did not matter to Hebrews whether or not these events in Jesus' life really happened, then this seems quite misleading. For although Hebrews assuredly

¹Grässer, "Jesus," pp. 81f.

²Ibid., p. 79.

thought theologically in this passage, his thought was surely oriented toward the real past life of Jesus as a man--or rather--to the picture of Jesus handed on to him through tradition. Indeed, Hebrews took a keen interest in the particular kind of life Jesus lived just because it bore such profound significance for his exhortation and christology.

He (Hebrews) certainly does not dismiss the details of our Lord's earthly life or his inward experiences up to and including His passion as possessing no relevance for the "post-Easter" faith of the Church. On the contrary, he draws from those details and experiences lessons of great practical import for his readers' Christian life.¹

It was of great importance for Hebrews and his readers to know that Jesus really did agonize about his death in prayer. It was of great importance for Hebrews and his readers to know that Jesus obeyed God to the very end in the face of actual earthly temptation and suffering. Indeed, the assertion of Jesus' humanity and prayer as bare facts ("Dass") would scarcely have sufficed to bolster the lagging hearts and bodies of men struggling against temptations and sufferings which were all too real. It was the real human life of Jesus, a life lived in a particular way that provided Hebrews and his readers with a concrete hope and a credible confidence. For Hebrews, history was important; and Jesus' history was of supreme importance.

¹F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 98.

Chapter 5

THE HIGH PRIEST FROM JUDAH (Hb. 7:14)

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I. Introduction

In the words of Hb. 7:14 we encounter what appears to be a clear historical reference to Jesus' descent from the tribe of Judah (προδὸν γὰρ ὅτι ἐξ Ἰουδα ἀνατέταλκεν ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν). We shall attempt by an exegesis of this passage to analyse the author of Hebrews' knowledge, presentation and use of this fact concerning Jesus' human lineage. We shall also seek to estimate the significance which this reference to the outward details of Jesus' birth had for the author of Hebrews.

II. Exegesis of Hb. 7:14

A. Context--The Melchizedekian Priesthood (Hb. 7)

Drawing upon the words of Ps. 110:4 the author of Hebrews in chapters 5 and 6 has directed his readers' attention to his peculiar theme of Jesus' priesthood κατὰ τὴν τάξιν Μελχισέδεκ (5:6, 10; 6:20). Thus, the author prepared the way for his fuller treatment in chapter 7 of the nature and implications of Jesus' priesthood κατὰ τὴν τάξιν Μελχισέδεκ .

In 7:1-3 the author recounts the OT narrative account of Abraham's encounter with Melchizedek (Gen. 14:18-20).¹ To the basic

¹For a thorough examination of the ways in which the figure of Melchizedek is treated in the OT, Philo, the Qumran scrolls, Josephus, the early church (especially the Melchizedekians and Hierakas the Egyptian), rabbinic Judaism, the Epistle to the Hebrews and gnosticism see the excellent treatment of F. L. Horton, Jr., The Melchizedek Tradition: A Critical Examination of the Sources to the Fifth

content of the story in the OT the author of Hebrews adds further comments about Melchizedek (v.3) which conjure up such a lofty picture of Melchizedek that the author even likens Melchizedek to the Son of God (ἀφωμοιωμένος δὲ τῷ υἱῷ τοῦ θεοῦ , v.3)¹ and refers mysteriously to his continuing priestly ministry (εἰς τὸ διηνεκές , v.3).²

From the OT narrative the author then adduces several ways in which Melchizedek--notably of non-Levitical lineage (ὁ δὲ μὴ γενεαλογούμενος ἐξ αὐτῶν , v.6a)³--is reckoned superior to Abraham and by extension to the Levites (7:4-10). Abraham, the ancestor of all Israelites (including the Levites), paid a tithe to Melchizedek, a clear acknowledgment of Melchizedek's superiority (vv.4-6a). Indeed, in vv.9-10 the author argues that Levi himself could be said to have paid a tithe to Melchizedek since he was still in the loins of Abraham

Century A. D. and in the Epistle to the Hebrews, SNTS 30 (Cambridge, 1976). See also O. Michel, "Μελχισέδεκ," TDNT IV, ed. G. Kittel, trans. G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, 1967), pp. 568-71; B. Demarest, A History of Interpretation of Hebrews 7, 1-10 from the Reformation to the Present (Tübingen, 1976). See Horton, pp. 173-82, for a full bibliographical listing of materials relevant to the critical study of Melchizedek.

¹In this passage we are dealing with what Horton, Melchizedek, pp. 161f., calls 'antitypology,' a process whereby the author takes an earthly entity (Melchizedek) and contrasts it or connects it to its heavenly counterpart (Christ). Similarly in Hb. 9 (cf. 8:5) the earthly sanctuary is regarded as the antitype (ἀντίτυπος) of the true sanctuary in heaven (9:24). "The antitype gives us some idea of what the true sanctuary is like, as a copy does of the original (ix. 23)." Thus the author of Hebrews views Melchizedek's priesthood as a helpful and illustrative example of Christ's heavenly priesthood. F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 138, observes this relationship suggested in the words of Hb. 7:3 also, although he refers to Christ as the 'antitype' which determines the 'type' (Melchizedek). The difference is merely terminological.

²Cf. 7:17 (Ps. 110:4), εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα ; also 7:25, εἰς τὸ παντελές.

³In these words the author of Hebrews now first explicitly raises the issue that has brooded uneasily over his postulation of Jesus' high priesthood, namely Jesus' lack of a proper priestly genealogy. The author works out the full significance of this in vv.11ff. Like the heavenly type, Christ, the ancient high priest Melchizedek was not of Levitical stock.

when their meeting occurred.¹ Then too the fact that Melchizedek 'blessed' (εὐλόγηκεν , v.6) Abraham indicates Melchizedek's superiority, for it was axiomatic that the greater blessed the lesser (v.7). To the same effect the author also notes that scripture witnesses that Melchizedek "lives" (μαρτυρούμενος ὅτι ζῇ , v.8) while the levitical priests die off (v.8).²

After having established on scriptural grounds the superiority of Melchizedek and his priesthood, the author of Hebrews turns now to consider the "other priest" (ἕτερον ἱερέα, v.11) according to the order of Melchizedek, namely the Lord Jesus, and to begin to work out the implications of his preceding argument (vv.11-28). Indeed, the reference to "another priest" after Melchizedek's order, calling to mind the prophecy of Ps. 110:4 which occurred subsequent to the Law and the establishment of the levitical priesthood,³ seriously calls into question (for the author of Hebrews) the efficacy of the OT Law and its priesthood. The rhetorical question of 7:11 which expects the negative answer "none" points directly to this issue. The inauguration of a different priesthood implies the inadequacy of the old and points to its abolition. That a new act of God sets aside the old is a common mode of thought for the author of Hebrews and is conspicuous once again here.⁴ A new and better priesthood was required in order that

¹Indeed, as Horton, Melchizedek, pp. 156ff., argues at length, the chronological priority of Melchizedek and his priesthood--as seen in the Torah--to the levitical priesthood is of crucial significance for the author of Hebrews.

²Cf. Hb. 11:5 for a similar example of the idiomatic use of μαρτυρέω to refer to scriptural authority. Cf. 7:3 μήτε ζωῆς τέλος ἔχων , . . . εἰς τὸ διηκεῖς ; also 7:23-25.

³Clearly here the author of Hebrews regarded the prophecy of the Psalmist in 110:4 as post-dating the establishment of the levitical priesthood in the Pentateuch.

⁴Michel, Hebräer (1975), p. 269. Cf. Hb. 4:8; 7:11, 28; 8:7, 13; 10:2.

God's people might attain "perfection" (τελείωσις).¹ The author proceeds in v.12 to voice the inevitable (ἐξ ἀναγκῆς) implication of a change in the priesthood, namely a change in the Law as well; for the Law and the levitical priesthood were inextricably linked.² In vv.13-14 the author reasons that all this is borne out by the fact that the new priest according to Melchizedek's order belonged³ to a non-levitical tribe, a tribe which had never exercised a cultic ministry at the altar (τῷ θυσιαστηρίῳ, v.13)⁴ and concerning which the Law of Moses had nothing whatever about priests to say (v.14). "Here the contrast with Levi makes the mention of that tribe necessary."⁵ It is precisely this reference in 7:14 to Jesus' descent from Judah which most concerns us here.

B. Jesus' Descent from Judah (Hb. 7:14)

The intensified adjective πρόδηλον with ὅτι⁶ suggests that the following statement is "a well known and publicly recognised

¹See above p. 55 n.4.

²This close connexion of the Law and the levitical priesthood is made most explicit for the author of Hebrews in their common inability to mediate adequately God's salvation to His people. The levitical priesthood does not bring τελείωσις (4:11); the Law οὐδὲν . . . ἔτελειωσεν (7:19).

³μετέσχηκεν; cf. Hb. 2:14 μέτεσχευ. See P. E. Hughes, Hebrews, p. 359 n. 14; also F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 41 n. 55.

⁴F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 146 n. 51, notes that David and Solomon were said to have offered sacrifices on some occasions (cf. 2 Sam. 6:13, 17f.; 24:25; 1 Kg. 3:4; 8:62ff.). The author of Hebrews, however, clearly has the Pentateuchal legislation in mind.

⁵Westcott, Hebrews, p. 182.

⁶See Bauer, Greek-English Lexicon, p. 711 ("it is known to all"); also Robertson, Greek Grammar, p. 1034, and Blass-Debrunner, Greek Grammar, 397.4. Cf. 1 Tim. 5:24, 25.

fact."¹ That Jesus belonged to the tribe of Judah was common knowledge to the author of Hebrews and his contemporaries, needing no further authentication by the author. While Phillips' rendering of πρόδηλον γὰρ ὅτι, "it is a matter of history," is unjustified as a translation,² it does immediately raise the pertinent question of whether the author of Hebrews referred to Jesus' descent from Judah as a historically verifiable fact, or as a well known theological assertion vis-a-vis the Messiah. The clause πρόδηλον γὰρ ὅτι by itself gives no direct answer to this question, though we shall return to this issue again below.

As was the case earlier in Hb. 2:3 (ὁ κύριος),³ the designation ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν for Jesus is used here in reference to the earthly Jesus.⁴ The concern in Hb. 7:11-14 with Jesus' human descent, by way of contrast to descent from Levi, would seem to verify this. In this passage little of christological import may be derived from the author's use here of the κύριος title for Jesus.

That which was clear to all was that Jesus was a member of the tribe of Judah (ἐξ Ἰουδα ἀνατέταλκεν). The verb ἀνατέταλκεν merits some comment here. Interpreters commonly debate whether the dominant imagery suggested by ἀνατέλλω in 7:14 is that of the sun or a star

¹Delitzsch, Hebrews I, p. 353, See also Bleek, Hebräer II2, pp. 362f. ("was Klar vor Augen liegt"), for numerous examples of classical usage. κατάδηλον in Hb. 7:15 is considered to be a further intensification of πρόδηλον.

²The simple "it is evident" seems the best translation.

³See the examination of Hb. 2:3 above. Cf. Hb. 13:20, ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς.

⁴Windisch, Hebräerbrief, p. 65, simply notes: "wie 2,3 vom geschichtlichen Jesus."

rising up in the sky,¹ or of vegetation sprouting up from its root or from the earth.² Though no consensus of opinion exists on this matter, the basic sense is plain enough: Jesus came from the tribe of Judah. A potentially more significant point here is the distinctive messianic connotation of this word, as evidenced by the use of the noun ἀνατολή (ἡλίου) in Zech. 6:12 and 3:8 to designate the Messiah, the righteous or true "branch" from David (Gen. 49:9-10). Yet it is probably true to say that the author of Hebrews shows little or no interest here in Jesus' messiahship as such.³

C. Function in the Argument

What then was the point of this passage (7:11-14) and what function does the author's reference to Jesus' descent from Judah serve vis-a-vis the point of this passage?

The very fact that the eschatological priest Jesus arose out of the tribe of Judah, outside the specific genealogical boundaries expressly prescribed by the Mosaic Law, proved that the Law and the levitical priesthood had been set aside and superseded by the new and better hope provided by Jesus and his priesthood κατὰ τὴν τάξιν

¹E.g., Num. 24:17; Mal. 4:2; Isa. 60:1, etc. The most notable example in the NT is 2 Pt. 1:19 where the author says of Christ: φῶς-φῶρος ἀνατείλει ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν.

²E.g., Jer. 23:5; 33:15; Zech. 6:12; 3:8; Isa. 11:1, etc. Cf. Philo, De conf ling. 62 (the noun ἀνατολή used here of the Logos).

³Ultimately, of course, the argument of Hebrews would have only proven convincing to people already convinced of Jesus' messiahship. With such an audience in mind, it seems as though the author of Hebrews could have gained much through a more explicit exploitation of the fact of Jesus' messiahship; yet the author does not do so. This then seems to fit in well with the view that the author of Hebrews is particularly interested in this reference to Jesus' descent from Judah as a concrete historical fact, and only secondarily for its messianological significance. See T. Robinson, Hebrews, p. 99.

Μελχισέδεκ .¹ Indeed, each verse in this passage, climaxing in v.14 with the reference to Jesus' tribe, points toward the negative conclusion: The Law and the levitical priesthood must have lost their former validity.² Thus, the reference to Jesus' descent from Judah in v.14 functions as the historical proof that the old priesthood and Law no longer enjoyed the same validity as before.³ Thus, the author has presented his readers with a radical "legal revolution."⁴

It should be stressed here that the author of Hebrews does not refer to Jesus' descent from Judah as the basis for Jesus' priesthood; indeed, there were many who descended from Judah. But in the verses immediately following our passage the author does draw attention to what he understands to be the basis for Jesus' priestly appointment: Jesus has become a priest not by satisfying any legal requirements regarding fleshly descent, but κατὰ δύναμιν ζωῆς ἀκαταλύτου(7:16).⁵

¹Horton, Melchizedek, pp. 162-164, argues convincingly that the words ἀπάτωρ , ἀμήτωρ , ἀγενεαλόγητος in Hb. 7:3 refer to priestly qualifications (specifically a Levite genealogy) and not primarily, as is often supposed, to biology (miraculous birth). Contra Montefiore, Hebrews, p. 119 and Spicq, Hébreux II, p. 184. These words in 7:3 then correspond, Horton reasons, as antitype to type to the way in which Jesus became a priest; i.e., without the benefit of a proper priestly genealogy (7:11-14). See also B. Demarest, "Hebrews 7:3: A Crux Interpretum Historically Considered," EQ 49 (1977), pp. 141-162, for a historical treatment of the interpretations of Hb. 7:3.

²Bleek, Hebräer II2, pp. 364f.

³Riggenbach, Hebräer, p. 197, speaks of this reference to Jesus' descent from Judah as a "historischen Beweises." Cf. Spicq, Hébreux II, p. 190; also Grässer, "Jesus," p. 74.

⁴A. B. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 264.

⁵Grässer, "Jesus," p. 76, rightly rejects the thought that Jesus' descent from Judah is viewed as the basis for the church's confession of Christ as their high priest.

III. Background

We now turn to certain matters of background pertaining to Hebrews' reference to Jesus' descent from Judah and the family of David.

A. Jewish Backgrounds

The Torah expressly prescribes the levitical tribe as the only tribe of priesthood within Israel. Subsequent to the giving of the Law, Jewish history yields no example whatsoever of a non-levitical priest. Although non-Zadokites, even the Hasmoneans, who took to themselves the Jewish high priesthood, were of priestly stock.

The author of Hebrews has, therefore, looked prior to the giving of the Law to the anomalous priesthood of Melchizedek (Gen. 14:18-20). But was there anywhere in Judaism prior to or contemporary with the Epistle to the Hebrews any thought that there would be ever anything other than a levitical priesthood? Was there any strain of thought within Judaism which expected a non-levitical priest sometime in Israel's future? The question of a messianic priest in Jewish expectations is a complex question which deserves more study than the context of the present study will allow.¹ But for our immediate purposes, we may limit our enquiry to the specific question whether Judaism ever envisaged, or even considered, the establishment of a non-levitical priesthood.

¹See, for example, S. Mowinckel, He That Cometh, trans. G. W. Anderson (Oxford, 1956), especially pp. 286-291. A. J. B. Higgins, "The Priestly Messiah," NTS 13 (1967), pp. 211-239; B. Vawter, "Levitical Messianism and the New Testament," in The Bible in Current Catholic Thought, ed. J. L. McKenzie (New York, 1964), pp. 83-99. Of course, this list could be greatly enlarged with references to articles which deal with the messianic thoughts of a particular piece of literature. The article of J. R. Schaefer, "The Relationship Between Priestly and Servant Messianism in the Epistle to the Hebrews," CBQ 30 (1968), pp. 359-385, looks at this issue particularly in the light of Hebrews.

We only refer to Philo in passing on this point. To be sure Philo and the author of Hebrews share an interest in Melchizedek,¹ although Philo never uses the OT text of supreme importance for the author of Hebrews, Ps. 110:4. But while Philo primarily utilizes Melchizedek as a figure for allegorizing,² the author of Hebrews quite differently sees him as a historical antitype for the historical person Jesus (7:1-28). More specifically to our point, Philo never reveals any expectation of a non-levitical high priest.

More interesting here, however, is the expectation in some Jewish circles of a priestly messianic figure alongside the royal or princely Messiah in the messianic kingdom.

J. R. Schaefer sees the roots of this expectation in the OT itself.³ He explains that the expectation of an ideal messianic priest grew--understandably among the Levites--after the exile when David's line no longer ruled. The ascendancy of the Hasmoneans, a priestly family, in the intertestamental period (134-135 B. C.) greatly enhanced this expectation. Those who envisioned an ideal priest functioning during the messianic age may well have looked back to Deut. 33:8-11 as a covenant with Levites akin to God's covenant with David in

¹R. Williamson, Philo and Hebrews, pp. 434-437, cites five passages in Philo which have to do with Melchizedek: Leg. All. III 79, 82; De cong. 99; De Abr. 235 and the so-called "Harris Fragment" (quoted in full by Moffatt, Hebrews, p. 91). See also the extensive excursus on Melchizedek and Jesus in Spicq, Hébreux II, pp. 203-214.

²It should be noted, however, that the author of Hebrews does, like Philo, work out an allegorical etymology of Melchizedek's name (Leg. All. III 79). Yet, as S. Sowers, The Hermeneutics of Philo and Hebrews, p. 123, points out, with this allegorical etymology the similarity between Philo and Hebrews ends. For Philo, the historical person Melchizedek was of no real significance, except as a foil for further allegorizing (see especially Sowers, pp. 119-126).

³Schaefer, "Messianism," pp. 363ff.

2 Sam. 7:12-16. Perhaps the post-exilic Jer. 33:14-26 is as strong a witness as any to the belief that God's covenant with Levi would be as eternal as His covenant with David.

For thus says the Lord: David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel, and the Levitical priests shall never lack a man in my presence to offer burnt offerings, to burn cereal offerings, and to make sacrifices for ever. (vv.17f.)

Yet in the OT it remains clear that there was no anticipation of a future non-levitical priesthood. If anything, the levitical priesthood's validity was underlined emphatically, a validity which in some Jewish circles reached the extent of the belief that the levitical priesthood would continue on forever.

Do the scrolls of the Qumran community reveal any thought of a non-levitical priest in the age to come? The messianism of the DSS remains a much disputed issue in its particulars, but it is likely that the DSS do reveal an expectation of two messianic figures: the "anointed ones of Aaron and Israel" (the so-called priestly and royal Messiahs).¹ Yet it is clear here that the messianic priest is of levitical descent, the Messiah of Aaron. The DSS never hint at the possibility of another tribe ever taking upon itself the priesthood of Israel.²

¹E. g., 1QS 9:10-11 speaks clearly of the future coming of the Prophet and the anointed ones of Aaron and Israel. There is a vast amount of information and discussion on the messianic expectations of the Qumran community. We give just a small sampling of some works we found helpful: Karl Kuhn, "The Two Messiahs of Aaron and Israel," in The Scrolls and the New Testament, ed. K. Stendahl (New York, 1957), pp. 54-64; R. Brown, "The Messianism of Qumran," CBQ 19 (1957), pp. 53-82; A. J. B. Higgins, "The Priestly Messiah," NTS 13 (1967), pp. 211-239; F. F. Bruce, Biblical Exegesis in the Qumran Texts (London, 1960), especially pp. 41-55; and Y. Yadin, "The Scrolls and the Epistle to the Hebrews," in Aspects of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Scripta Hierosolymitana, ed. C. Rabin and Y. Yadin (Jerusalem, 1958), pp. 36-55.

²Indeed, the strong Zadokite sentiment evident in the DSS looks forward to the re-establishment of the proper levitical priesthood,

Therefore, the possible connexion of a "new priesthood" with the eschatological Messiah-King in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs¹ (T12P) is of particular interest with respect to Hb. 7:14.

i. e., the Zakokite line. One of the characteristics of the DSS is their belief that the messianic priest was superior in status to the lay Messiah. Y. Yadin, "The Scrolls and the Epistle to the Hebrews," pp. 36-55, proposes the thesis that Hebrews' addressees were "a group of Jews originally belonging to the DSS sect who were converted to Christianity, carrying with them some of their previous beliefs" (p. 38). One of those beliefs, Yadin argues, was the belief in a coming messianic priest from Aaron's seed who would be superior in status to the royal Messiah. Clearly, Yadin further argues, such a belief greatly threatened Jesus' unique authority and the author of Hebrews designs his unique priestly christology (Jesus=royal and priestly Messiah) to refute just such a belief (p. 44). H. Kosmala, Hebräer-Essener-Christen (Leiden, 1959), pp. 81-91, essentially shares Yadin's conviction. Kosmala also sees a Christian community with similar messianological convictions behind the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs (see below in the present study). Sowers, Hermeneutics, p. 65, however, does not find Yadin's thesis convincing; cf. F. F. Bruce, "'To the Hebrews' or 'To the Essenes'," NTS 9 (1962-63), pp. 217-232; also Higgins, "Priestly Messiah," pp. 231-234. But however this may be, the DSS never consider a non-levitical priesthood. The author of Hebrews, on the other hand, considers Jesus, from the tribe of Judah (7:14), the great high priest according to the order of Melchizedek (Ps. 110:4). Again it is Hebrews' unique application of Ps. 110:4 to Jesus which comes to the forefront. The Qumran scroll concerning Melchizedek, 11QMelchizedek (11QMelch) envisions Melchizedek as a heavenly and greatly exalted (arch-) angelic figure (e. g., Michael). The author of Hebrews regards Melchizedek primarily as a historical figure (7:1-10), but the highly exalted image of Melchizedek in 11QMelch does find a certain resonance in Hebrews' high regard for Melchizedek. The genius of the author of Hebrews lay in his use of Ps. 110:4 to prove that the priesthood of Jesus, like that of Melchizedek, depended not on a genealogy but on the call of God. On 11QMelch see: M. de Jonge and A. S. van der Woude, "11QMelchizedek and the New Testament," NTS 12 (1966), pp. 301-326; J. A. Fitzmyer, "Further Light on Melchizedek from Qumran Cave 11," JBL 86 (1967), pp. 25-41; M. Delcor, "Melchizedek from Genesis to the Qumran Texts and the Epistle to the Hebrews," JSJ 2 (1971), pp. 115-135.

¹See R. H. Charles, The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs (London, 1908); The Greek Versions of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs (Oxford, 1908); M. de Jonge, The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs. A Critical Edition of the Greek Text (Leiden, 1978). Note especially these works: G. R. Beasley-Murray, "The Two Messiahs in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs," JTS 48 (1947), pp. 1-12; M. de Jonge, The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs. A Study of their Text, Composition and Origin (Assen, 1953); "Christian Influence in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs," in Studies on the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, ed. M. de Jonge (Leiden, 1975), pp. 183-192; J. Becker, Untersuchungen zur Entstehungsgeschichte der Testamente der Zwölf Patriarchen

Though several passages from the T12P--usually gathered from the so-called Levi-Judah passages--are of interest here,¹ two from the T. Levi are especially notable.

While textual and interpretational difficulties abound in T. Levi 8, the prophecy of a king from Judah who shall institute a "new priesthood" (ἱερατεῖαν νέαν, 8:14) for the Gentiles is striking.²

(Leiden, 1970). The entire volume on the T12P edited by de Jonge is worth consulting. See J. H. Charlesworth, The Pseudepigrapha and Modern Research (Missoula, 1976), pp. 215-220 for a full bibliographical listing for the T12P.

¹Cf. T. Gad 8:1; T. Naph. 8:2-3; T. Dan 5:10 (cf. v.4) and T. Simeon 7:1-2. Similarly, these passages charge Israel to honour both Levi and Judah because salvation shall proceed jointly from them. Levi almost always precedes Judah in the listing, an indication of the superiority of Levi over Judah in the mind(s) of the writer(s) of the T12P (the exception is T. Gad 8:1). T. Reuben 6:5-12 is particularly interesting since v.11 refers to Levi the high priest as the one whom the Lord chose to be "king over all the nations," who would on Israel's behalf "die in wars visible and invisible" and be their "eternal king" (v.12). Charles, Testaments, p. 15, understands this passage as a reference to the Maccabean priest-king, though de Jonge, "Christian Influence," pp. 221ff., argues that a Christian interpretation seems more likely. De Jonge prefers the translation of T. Reuben 6:8 as "until the consummation of the times of Christ the high priest of whom the Lord spoke." Charles translates ἀρχιερέως Χριστοῦ as "anointed High Priest." De Jonge concludes his argument: "The simplest interpretation is here again, the Christian one. The Levitical priesthood will be succeeded by Christ as high priest, as it is taught in the Epistle to the Hebrews" (p. 222). De Jonge may be right concerning 6:8, but the vv. 10-12 still refer clearly to Levi who shall be "eternal king." The ambiguity of the passage makes hard conclusions extremely difficult to make. T. Joseph 19 is also interesting, though singularly difficult since the Greek and Armenian versions differ considerably. All the emphasis in T. Joseph 19 lies on Judah from whose tribe a virgin bears a "lamb without spot" (v.8), one who shall save all Israel. Vv.8 and 11 reveal the clear influence of a Christian hand. Interestingly, the mention of Levi in v.11 almost seems an after-thought.

²ὅτι βασιλεὺς ἐκ τοῦ Ιουδα ἀναστήσεται καὶ ποιήσει ἱερατεῖαν νέαν, κατὰ τὸν τύπον τῶν ἐθνῶν εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη (T. Levi 8:14). The "new priesthood" corresponds to the "new name" (ὄνομα καινόν) of the third κλῆρος of Levi. The final clause of v.14 reveals a 'universalism' which Charles, Testaments, p. 45, sees evidences of throughout the T12P (see especially Charles' note on T. Benj. 9:2; pp. 210f.).

Though by no means certain, if M. de Jonge is correct in his position that this passage represents a later Christian interpretation of the three κληροί of Levi¹ which forgets that these offices are to be contemporary and confined to the tribe of Levi, then we find here a particularly close affinity to the Epistle to the Hebrews, especially Hb. 7:14.²

The T. Levi 18 is yet more intriguing. In T. Levi 18:1 the writer prophesies the failure of the priesthood.³ T. Levi 18:2 then presents the Lord raising up a "new priest" (ἱερέα καινόν) to whom the Lord shall reveal His word and through whom the Lord shall execute righteous judgment upon the earth. T. Levi 18:3a is especially interesting in light of its possible intimation that the new priest is at the same time king (καὶ ἀνατελεῖ ἄστρον αὐτοῦ ἐν οὐρανῷ ὡς βασιλέως). De Jonge sees in T. Levi 18:1-3 a close agreement with

¹De Jonge, Testaments (Assen, 1953), pp. 45f. While Christian influence is commonly seen in T. Levi 8, a "later Christian interpretation" of the three ἀρχαί of Levi is by no means certain. Charles suggests a historical interpretation: the first κληρος refers to Moses (v.12), the second to Aaron (v.13), and the third to the Maccabean priest-kings who took both the high priesthood and kingship to themselves (see Testaments, pp. 44f.). T. W. Manson, "Miscellanea Apocalyptica III. Test.XII Patr.: Levi viii," JTS 48 (1947), pp. 59-61, felt the first two offices were Moses and Aaron, then third, the Zadokite dynasty. De Jonge prefers to understand the passage as Christian and eschatological in scope; the three ἀρχαί refer to Abraham the believer (v.12), the Aaronite priesthood (v.13) and finally, the priestly and kingly office of Jesus Christ (v.14). See de Jonge, Testaments (Assen, 1953), pp.45f.

²De Jonge, Testaments (Assen, 1953), p. 46.

³ἐκλείψει ἡ ἱερωσύνη (T. Levi 18:1b). Charles, Testaments, pp. 62ff., believes that the levitical priesthood as such did not break down according to this verse. Rather only the corrupt Zadokite high priesthood failed and ceased. It was replaced by the Maccabean high priesthood (non-Zadokite though still levitical). The text here again is ambiguous, though it is easy to see how the passage could be interpreted of the Messiah Jesus by a Christian--the whole levitical priesthood then having failed (cf. Hb. 7:11ff.) and been replaced by the "new priest," the great high priest Jesus.

the christology of Hebrews which postulates a single figure as the Priest-King of the last days.¹ De Jonge also draws further attention to the fact that nowhere in T. Levi 18 is the tribe of Levi mentioned.² For de Jonge, the Christian influence on T. Levi 18, like T. Levi 8, seems clear, particularly in 18:1-9.³

The T. Judah 21:2ff. presents a plainly different picture. It is clear there that the priesthood belongs to Levi and the kingdom to Judah, the priesthood always taking precedence over the royalty.⁴ This suggests an inconsistency within the T12P. On some occasions a two-figure messianic doctrine akin to that of the Qumran community is apparently taught--a priestly Messiah (of Aaron or Levi) and a political Messiah (of Israel or Judah).⁵ Though it is by no means clear, it appears elsewhere as though a single messianic figure (whether of Levi or Judah) is expected in whom both the priestly and political roles are combined.⁶ But whatever may be the reason for this apparent theological imprecision, the grave difficulties surrounding the issues of the composition and provenance⁷ of the T12P make it almost impos-

¹"Christian Influence," p. 217.

²Ibid.

³Note especially vv.3, 7 and 9.

⁴Ἐμοὶ γὰρ ἔδωκεν ὁ θεὸς τὴν βασιλείαν καὶ κείνῳ τὴν ἱερατείαν, καὶ ὑπέταξε τὴν βασιλείαν τῇ ἱερωσύνῃ (T. Judah 21:2; cf. T. Issachar 5:7; T. Naph. 5:3, 4). See note on T. Reuben 6:5-12 in Charles, Testaments, p. 13; cf. de Jonge, "Christian Influence," p. 229.

⁵If T. Judah 21 is taken as having an eschatological perspective, then it clearly presents an example of this. See further G. R. Beasley-Murray, "The Two Messiahs," pp. 1-12; cf. F. F. Bruce, "The Kerygma of Hebrews," Int 23 (1969), pp. 3-19 (especially p. 7); also Bruce, Biblical Exegesis in the Qumran Texts, pp. 41ff.

⁶See above on T. Levi 8 and 18.

⁷De Jonge holds that the T12P represent (in their present form) the work of a Christian redactor using earlier Jewish and Christian materials for the formulation of his own peculiar theology. Charles' more traditional approach has been to regard the T12P as essentially a Jewish document compiled over the years which in a

ible to arrive at any hard conclusions on this matter.

But what can be said concerning the relationship of the T12P to the Epistle to the Hebrews, in particular of this issue of the priesthood? First, while the T12P do speak of a "new priest" and a "new priesthood" and even on one occasion specify the failure of the old priesthood, no explicit rejection of the levitical priesthood occurs. Indeed, more typically the T12P ascribe the highest honour to the tribe of Levi. In Hebrews, on the other hand, the precise point made in Hb. 7:11-14 is that the levitical priesthood has been rejected in favour of Jesus' non-levitical priesthood. Another point of difference may be seen in that the author of Hebrews presents Jesus' priesthood in light of the antitype of Melchizedek and his priesthood (Gen. 14:18-20; Ps. 110:4). The T12P, on the other hand, never mention Melchizedek and do not utilize Ps. 110.¹ Finally, those portions of the T12P which possibly do reflect an affinity with Hebrews (notably T. Levi 8:11-15; 18:1-9) are likely the result of the Christian interpolator or redactor. Though the question of the dating of the T12P is a complex and much disputed matter, it is probable that the beginning point for the Christian interpolations or redactions was no earlier than the early part of

stage was reworked by a Christian interpolator. The difficulty, of course, lies in determining what is Jewish and what is Christian--their extensive intertwining renders the task almost impossible to resolve. See M. de Jonge, "Interpretation," pp. 183-192; also note the brief comments of J. H. Charlesworth, "Reflections on the SNTS Pseudepigrapha Seminar at Duke on the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs," NTS 23 (1976-77), pp. 296-304.

¹Charles, Testaments, p. 15, considers the words ὁ κύριος (T. Reuben 6:8) to be a clear allusion to Ps. 110 (cf. de Jonge, "Christian Influence," p. 222). According to Charles, T. Reuben 6:8 is a reinterpretation or new application of Ps. 110. This, however, seems a weak allusion at best and does not change the essentially true point that Ps. 110 plays little if any role in the thoughts of the author(s) of the T12P concerning priesthood.

the second century.¹ This would lend support to the assertion that it is more likely that these portions of the T12P were influenced by Hebrews, and not vice-versa.² It would appear, therefore, that the significance of the T12P for Hb. 7:14 is minimal at best.

From our brief survey of the relevant Jewish literature, we can point to an expectation present at the dawn of Christianity in at least some Jewish circles that God would raise up an ideal messianic priest. Never, however, is a non-levitical priest seriously considered. Hebrews presents a stark contrast to these Jewish messianic expectations at this point, for the author of Hebrews uniquely postulates the unity of the messianic priest and prince in Jesus, of the tribe of Judah (7:14). Clearly the doctrine of Hebrews here has gone far beyond anything anticipated in the messianic expectations of Judaism, for whom a high priest from Judah was simply inconceivable.³

B. Early Christian Tradition

A far greater significance must be attached to the well attested tradition of Jesus' Davidic descent present at every level of the early Christian kerygma (Rom. 1:3; 2 Tim. 2:8; Lk. 2:4; Hb. 7:14; Acts 2:25-31; 13:23, 34-37; 15:16; Rev. 5:5; 22:16;

¹Charlesworth, The Pseudepigrapha and Modern Research, pp. 211-220, indicates a date around A. D. 100 because of a dependence on the Gospel of John (Charlesworth refers here to the work of Jürgen Becker, Untersuchungen, pp. 371-377).

²F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 97 n. 39, asserts that "whatever else may be said about the provenience of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, there can be little doubt about the Christian origin of such a passage as that in T. Levi 8:14 . . . This is dependent on the Epistle to the Hebrews, and not vice versa."

³We concur with Vawter's conclusion, "Levitical Messianism," pp. 98f.: "The doctrine of Hebrews is not the end result of a Jewish speculation, but a new revelation. . . . The Christ-event in its unicity, so far transcends the OT expectation as to have made all its expressions an inadequate anticipation."

also Lk. 1:27, 32; Rev. 3:7). The two gospel genealogies also present Jesus' descent from the tribe of Judah and the family of David (Mtt. 1:1-17, 20; Lk. 3:23-38).¹ Indeed, the widespread awareness of Jesus' Davidic descent in the early church almost certainly indicates that the author of Hebrews was dependent on this early Christian tradition for his knowledge of Jesus' tribal descent.²

Yet at the same time the use of the verb ἀνατέλλω in Hb. 7:14 would also appear to point to the author's consciousness of the OT's witness to the Messiah's descent from Judah and David (Gen. 49:9-10; Zech. 3:8; 6:12; Jer. 23:5).³ While the author of Hebrews

¹Bruce, "Kerygma," pp. 3ff. We could also note the occasions when "Son of David" is used as a title for Jesus (Mk. 10:47-48 par.; Mk. 9:27; 15:22; 21:9, 15; cf. Mk. 11:10; Mtt. 12:23). Jesus' perplexing questioning in Mk. 12:35-37 apparently indicates that the Messiah can be both an exalted Lord and a human son of David (see J. A. Fitzmyer, "The Son of David Tradition and Mt 22:41-46 and Parallels," in Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament (London, 1971), pp. 113-126.

²Michel, Hebräer (1975), p. 271.

³The Davidic tradition in the OT has at its base the story of David who was chosen by Yahweh to rule over Israel as their king (1 Sam. 16:1-13; 2 Sam. 6:21). David was noted to be zealous for the worship of Yahweh (2 Sam. 6:6-9) and was favoured by His word (1 Sam. 25:31; 2 Sam. 3:9-10; 5:2). But Yahweh's choice of David was more than just a personal favour of David alone; it was an event of corporate significance as well for Israel's history. Indeed, Yahweh 'covenants' with David, promising that his seed shall rule Israel forever (2 Sam. 7:12-17; 2 Sam. 23:1-17). David is Yahweh's anointed agent, His 'Messiah' (2 Sam. 23:1). See S. Mowinckel, He That Cometh (Oxford, 1956). This Davidic tradition was developed in the so-called 'royal psalms', the prophets and the writings. In the Psalms David is repeatedly referred to as the "anointed" (e. g., Ps. 18:51; 89:39, 52; 132:10, 17). Yet more significantly David's dynasty will endure unshakably forever (Ps. 18:51; 89:5, 30, 37; 132:10-12). Two Psalms used in Hebrews frequently (2, 110) promise a universal dominion to the anointed Davidic heir--who is regarded as God's 'son' (Ps. 2:7). The prophet Jeremiah prophesied the future restoration of Israel (Judah) and uttered the promise of a "new covenant" (Jer. 31:31). Israel would again serve Yahweh and David, their king whom God would raise up for them (Jer. 30:9). Thus, for Jeremiah David has become the ideal for the future king; the new royal son of David will reign with justice, righteousness and wisdom (Jer. 23:5; cf. Ezk. 37:23-24). Thus the future sense of 'David' is developed in the Psalms and the

himself makes little or no use of the fact of Jesus' messiahship in our passage, this does raise the old question of whether the assertion in the NT of Jesus' Davidic descent was a later theological inference from the church's conviction of Jesus' messiahship, or a statement of history. But even granted the obvious theological significance the NT writers assigned to Jesus' Davidic descent, the united witness of the NT plus the fact that the Jews of the apostles' time never disputed Jesus' Davidic origins argues strongly that there was quite a firm historical basis for the assertion of Jesus' Davidic descent--¹ although ultimately this cannot be proven. In any case, the author of Hebrews himself almost certainly began with the early Christian tradition relating Jesus' Davidic heritage.²

prophets. Finally, Daniel mentions an "anointed prince" (9:25) in Jerusalem who shall restore Israel. It is also worth noting here that the Qumran community expected a "Messiah of Israel," the Davidic royal heir (e. g., 1QSa. 2:14, 20; cf. 1QS 9:11; CD 20:1; note especially 4QPatrBles 2:4--commenting on Gen. 49:10; 4QFlor. 1:11-13, commenting on 2 Sam. 7:11-14, clearly associates a salvific mission "in the last days" with the Davidic Messiah). Thus, Qumran may be regarded as an example of the full development or interpretation of the OT's seedling traditions about David--now, the title Messiah is given to David's ideal son expected at the "end of days." See also W. Michaelis, "Die Davidssohnschaft Jesu als historisches und kerygmatisches Problem," in Der historische Jesus und der kerygmatische Christus, ed. H. Ristow and K. Matthaie, second ed. (Berlin, 1961), pp. 317-330.

¹J. Jeremias, Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus. An Investigation into Economic and Social Conditions during the New Testament Period, trans. R. H. and C. H. Cave (London, 1969), pp. 290ff. Jeremias observes that accurate genealogical records were particularly important to the tribe of Levi and, for obvious reasons, the Davidic line of the tribe of Judah (pp. 275ff). Later misguided Christian attempts to trace a levitical heritage for Jesus are contradicted by all NT statements concerning Jesus' human family (see Bruce, Biblical Exegesis in the Qumran Texts, p. 85 n. 8; F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 147 n. 53; P. E. Hughes, Hebrews, pp. 262f.).

²Admittedly, this cannot be conclusively proven. Yet Windisch's assertion, Hebräerbrief, p. 26f., that the author of Hebrews likely derived his knowledge of Jesus' Judaic descent from the traditional Jewish messianic myth and the LXX (especially Gen. 49:10; Num. 24:17) is not convincing. In light of the fact that the

IV. Significance of Jesus' Earthly Life (Hb. 7:14)

Two questions now demand our attention. First, how did the author of Hebrews understand his assertion of Jesus' descent from Judah?

E. Riegenbach rightly remains sceptical concerning our ability to know just how the author of Hebrews thought of the NT tradition of Jesus' Davidic descent.¹ To be sure, the author of Hebrews reveals little of his messianology in our passage. Nevertheless, from Hb. 7:11-14 we can establish that the author of Hebrews did regard Jesus' descent from Judah as an authentic fact of Jesus' human history. The real nub of the author's argument in Hb. 7:11-14 concerns the human line of the priest's descent.² The author's purpose in Hb. 7:11-14 is, by reference to the great high priest Jesus' non-levitical human lineage, to expose the supersession of the OT priesthood which carried as its primary legitimation fleshly descent from the tribe of Levi as prescribed in the Torah. Thus, the actual fleshly descent of Jesus from "another tribe" (Judah) was the critical element in the author's argument. Indeed, if on historical grounds it could have been proven otherwise, that Jesus in fact did not come from the tribe of Judah, then serious doubt would have been cast upon this particular argument of the author. Therefore,

author of Hebrews is not particularly interested in messianic speculations in our passage, that he has placed himself already in a position of dependence upon apostolic sources and their traditions for his knowledge of the gospel (Hb. 2:3) and that the affirmation of Jesus' Davidic origin was a widespread early Christian tradition, it seems far more likely that the author of Hebrews was here drawing on an evangelical tradition handed down to him.

¹Hebräer, p. 198 n. 49.

²Indeed, the issue of the priest's genealogy is already seen to be a key issue in vv.1-10 as well (particularly vv.3, 6a).

though we know little else of how the author of Hebrews regarded the tradition of Jesus' descent from Judah, we can say that he did confidently (πρόδηλον γὰρ ὅτι) regard it here as an authentic and verifiable piece of information concerning Jesus' family history.¹

Then again, what does this passage tell us about the significance which the author assigned to the facts of Jesus' earthly life?

First, this passage does not tell us that Jesus' descent from Judah establishes him as the eschatological high priest. The author does establish that far more convincingly (κατάδηλον) to himself when he speaks of Jesus' becoming a priest according to "the power of an indestructible life" (7:15-16).² Rather, in 7:11-14 the author assumes Jesus to be a high priest. Given this status, his human descent from Judah instead of Levi yields concrete evidence of the obsolescence of both the levitical priesthood and the Law upon which it is based.³

But while the fact of Jesus' descent from Judah does not prove him to be high priest, it does (for the author of Hebrews who assumes Jesus' priesthood) disclose crucial information about the nature of Jesus' priesthood. Namely, Jesus' priesthood, unlike the levitical priesthood, does not depend on legalities concerning bodily descent for its authority, but upon the superior "power of an inde-

¹See above in this chapter, pp.193f.

²Grässer, "Jesus," p. 76, is anxious to point this out: "Nicht, weil Jesus aus Juda stammt, ist er der wahre Hohepriester nach der Weise Melchisedeks. Sondern weil er vorgängig als der Hohepriester bekannt wird, wird nachträglich auch sein Stammbaum für die Verifizierung dieses Bekenntnisses wichtig."

³See above in this chapter, pp. 194f.

structible life" (7:16). His priesthood is of a higher order, bringing with it a "better hope" that through the great high priest Jesus his people may in confidence draw near to God (7:19, 25; 4:16).¹ No longer are God's people at the mercy of the frailties and vicissitudes of the impotent levitical priesthood, for in Jesus they now have a high priest who holds his priesthood permanently and always lives to make intercession for his people (7:18-25). Here again in 7:25 the paraenetic concern of the author emerges as the objective which dominates his peculiar interpretation--although the paraenetic element in Hb. 7:14 is not explicit--of Jesus as Melchizedekian high priest here in Hb. 7.

But just how important is this reference to Jesus' descent from Judah for the author? In his book Hebrews and Hermeneutics G. Hughes repeatedly returns to his maxim that "history is the necessary, but not sufficient, basis for Christian faith."² In our passage the fact that Jesus came from the tribe of Judah is clearly not a sufficient basis for Christian faith in him as Messiah or as high priest, nor does the author present it as such. Thus, none would dispute the "not sufficient" segment of Hughes' dictum. But in what sense is this historical reference here in Hb. 7:14 to the outward detail of Jesus' birth "necessary" for the author's faith in Christ as his high priest?³ Without this historical fact would the author's

¹In the context of Hb. 7 it seems probable that the τελείωσις of Hb. 7:11 (only elsewhere in the NT at Lk. 1:45, and there in a different sense) refers to the complete (εἰς τὸ πᾶν τελεῖς) salvation of people who because of the supreme priestly ministry of Jesus can now draw near to God through him (7:23-25). Note especially the comments of Michel, Hebräer (1975), p. 269 n. 2.

²Note especially pp. 92-94 where Hughes looks particularly at Hb. 7:14. The present writer is greatly indebted to Hughes' lucid and penetrating analysis of the hermeneutical issues in Hebrews, especially as relating to Jesus (pp. 75-100).

³See Hughes, Hebrews and Hermeneutics, pp. 93f.

faith have been in jeopardy? It appears to us obvious that a theology which identifies Jesus as high priest would sooner or later be obligated to come to terms with the question of the hereditary levitical priesthood and its genealogical legitimation in the pentateuchal code. In other words, Hebrews' theology of Jesus' high priesthood demanded a historical note, a 'fact' which would have been indisputable, beyond the possible manipulations of faith--a "well known and publicly recognised fact"¹ (πρόδηλον γὰρ ὅτι, 7:14). As Westcott observed: "Here the contrast with Levi makes the mention of that (Jesus') tribe necessary."² G. Hughes speaks of the writer's awareness that he was obligated to indicate his faith's relationship to hard concrete 'facts'.³ In a sense, we may say that Hebrews' particular argument here in Hb. 7 receives indispensable support from the reference to this 'fact'. The motifs of the 'tithe' and the 'blessing' in the OT Melchizedek narrative (Hb. 7:1-10) are, assuredly, cunningly used by the author of Hebrews to indicate the superiority of Jesus' Melchizedekian priesthood, but the reference to Jesus' descent from Judah instead of Levi was the historical coup de grace as far as the levitical priesthood and the Law were concerned. Indeed, if this crucial historical note is eliminated or proven to be false, the author's argument falters badly. In this sense, then, the reference to Jesus' descent from Judah is 'necessary' to the author's faith in Jesus as his high priest; it is an indispensable point of support for his confession. Therefore, though this reference may appear to be inconsequential, its significance for the author ought not to be underestimated.

¹Delitzsch, Hebrews I, p. 353.

²Westcott, Hebrews, p. 182.

³Hughes, Hebrews and Hermeneutics, pp. 93f.

Chapter 6

JESUS: SUPREME INSPIRATION TO FAITH (Hb. 12:1-3)

Chapter 6

JESUS: SUPREME INSPIRATION TO FAITH (Hb. 12:1-3)

I. Introduction

Perhaps no passage in the NT underlines the authentic human faith of Jesus as strikingly as Hb. 12:1-3. Without hesitation the author of Hebrews presents a Jesus who has himself participated in the race of faith as a man, emerging victorious as the 'Archegos' and 'perfecter' of faith seated at the right hand of God. The author of Hebrews aligns Jesus unreservedly with the faith community, as the one to whom the present struggling church should now look for inspiration and guidance. The significance of Jesus' earthly life for the author of Hebrews is clearly once again addressed in this remarkable passage.

II. Contextual Considerations

The opening connective particle *τοιγαρουν* (12:1) suggests that an inference is being drawn from a preceding argument. As indicated by certain key linguistic connexions (*μαρτύρων*, *τελειωτήν*, *πίστεως*),¹ the author in Hb. 12:1ff continues a train of thought begin in Hb. 11. Most significantly, the faith motif which dominated Hb. 11 occurs again in Hb. 12:1-2. It seems no accident that the author describes Jesus in 12:2 as the pioneer and perfecter of faith (*τῆς πίστεως*).

¹ *μαρτύρων*, 12:1; (cp. *ἐμαρτυρήθησαν*, 11:2; *ἐμαρτυρήθη*, 11:4; *μαρτυροῦντες*, 11:4; *μεμαρτύρηται*, 11:5; *μαρτυρηθέντες*, 11:39); *τελειωτής*, 12:2 (cp. *τελειωθῶσιν*, 11:40); *πίστεως*, 12:2 (the *πίστις* word group occurs frequently throughout Hb. 11).

Hb. 11, therefore, forms the necessary backdrop for any full understanding of the reference to Jesus' earthly life in Hb. 12:1-3.

In Hb. 11, after an initial comment on the nature and character of faith (vv.1-3), the author parades before his readers' eyes a long and impressive train of faith-witnesses (11:4-8), all who despite their inability to see the goal of faith¹ and to experience a fulfillment of the promise,² placed their trust in the God who was able to raise men from the dead (11:19) and remained obedient to God--who is then himself the ultimate witness to their faithfulness (11:2, 4, 5, 39).³ The author then holds these faithful witnesses before his readers' eyes as heroes of the faith,⁴ thereby supplying strong encouragement to a faith which despite hardships and the troubling present inability to see the goal of faith holds obediently onto God's promise in confident hope of future vindication. That such faith works itself out actively in "endurance" also presents a clear point of contact between Hb. 11 and Hb. 12:1ff. Again and again the faith of the OT heroes was proven true by their enduring obedience and loyalty to God in the face of extreme hardship and persecution (11:32-38).

In 11:39-40 the author then summarizes his preceding argument and looks forward to the "better provision" (κρεῖττον τι προβλε-

¹ πραγμάτων ἑλεγχος οὐ βλεπομένων , Hb. 11:1.

²Promises may have been received (11:17), but The Promise--its ultimate fulfillment--was only "greeted from afar," not received by these ancient witnesses to faith.

³The consistent passive sense of μαρτυρέω in Hb. 11 is noteworthy. See below in this present study the section on μαρτύρων in Hb. 12:1.

⁴Moffatt, Hebrews, p. 193, noted Sir Joshua Fitch's interesting description of Hb. 11 as a National Portrait Gallery of the heroes and saints of Jewish history.

ψαμένου , 11:40)¹ which God holds before his people, a provision which would bring with it their "perfection."

The author greatly expands on the endurance theme in 12:4-11. Reflecting on an OT wisdom motif,² he instructs his readers that as true sons of God they should regard their endurance of hardships and sufferings as the proper discipline due a son from his father, part of an educational process (εἰς παιδείαν ὑπομένετε , 11:7).³ This process is for the sons' benefit; through it the sons participate in the father's holiness and discover that it yields the "peaceful fruit of righteousness" (1:10, 11). The connexion of this endurance theme to the present situation of the readers of Hebrews is directly stated in 12:4. They have experienced a certain amount of suffering related to their Christian confession of faith, though apparently martyrdom had not yet become their lot.⁴ In the ensuing internal struggle their will to endure was being sorely tried. Therefore, the author of Hebrews exhorts these "sons" of God to fix their constant and complete

¹What God has done in Jesus Christ is repeatedly described by the author of Hebrews as "better." The occurrences of κρείττον in Hebrews are numerous (7:19, 22; 8:6; 9:23; 10:34; 11:35).

²The author of Hebrews here cites Prov. 3:11, 12.

³As seen in Hb. 5:8, Jesus' suffering (καίπερ ὡν υἱός) likewise is regarded as educative, a process through which Jesus "learns obedience." See above in the present study the relevant section (Hb. 5:7-10) which examines the so-called "Paideia tradition" vis-a-vis Jesus the Son.

⁴Cf. Hb. 12:4, οὕτω μέχρις αἵματος . The dating of Hebrews is a notoriously difficult problem. The absence of any reference in the epistle to the destruction of the Jerusalem temple in Hebrews and the christological (high priestly) argument of Hebrews, which many would argue presupposes an ongoing Jewish high priestly ministry in the temple, is frequently understood to suggest a date slightly before A. D. 70 for the Epistle to the Hebrews (ad loc, Westcott, Buchanan, Spicq, F. F. Bruce, Hering, et al). The pre-martyrdom sense of this reference in Hb. 12:4 is often alluded to as a guide for the dating of Hebrews (cf. Riegenbach, Hebräer, p. 393; F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, p. xlii; Westcott, Hebrews, p. xlii).

attention on the Son of God, Jesus, who endured faithfully to the very end and was exalted to the presence of God himself (12:2, 3).

III. Exegetical Analysis of Hb. 12:1-3

A. Grammatical Analysis

To the basic self-inclusive exhortation ("Let us run the race") the author affixes three major dependent participial clauses (έχοντες , αποθέμενοι , ἀφορῶντες) which reflect on various aspects of the "race" or "Agon" and its participants. Verses one and two then compose a single sentence with one main verb (τρέχωμεν) and object (ἀγῶνα).

In 12:3 the author again exhorts his readers. To the main verb (ἀναλογίσασθε) and object (τόν - of Jesus) of the exhortation the author attaches a participial clause (ὑπομεμενηκότα) which outlines the salient feature of the intended object of their close consideration and a ἵνα -clause which indicates the purpose of their close consideration of Jesus.

B. Literary Structure of 12:1-2

E. B. Horning¹ perceives in Hb. 12:1-2 a chiastic structure. Horning sees a chiasm of nine phrases arranged in inverse parallel around the central phrase which provides the turning point of the sentence. Horning diagrams the chiastic structure in this way.²

¹E. B. Horning, "Chiasmus, Creedal Structure, and Christology in Heb. 12:1, 2," Biblical Research 23 (1978), pp. 37-48.

²Ibid., p. 41.

A τοσοῦτον ἔχοντες περικείμενον ἡμῖν νέφος μαρτύρων
 B ὄγκον ἀποθέμενοι πάντα καὶ τὴν εὐπερίστατον ἁμαρτίαν
 C δι' ὑπομονῆς.
 D τρέχωμεν τὸν προκείμενον ἡμῖν ἀγῶνα
 ἀφορῶντες εἰς τὸν τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτὴν Ἰησοῦν.
 D1 ὅς ἀντὶ τῆς προκειμένης αὐτῷ χαρᾶς.
 C1 ὑπέμεινεν σταυρὸν
 B1 αἰσχύνῃς καταφρονήσας
 A1 ἐν δεξιᾷ τε τοῦ θρόνου τοῦ θεοῦ κεκάθικεν

According to Horning, lines A and A1 both contain the idea of "session;" lines B and B1 parallel the ideas of laying aside sins and Jesus' despising the shame of the cross; lines C and C1 both address the endurance motif; and lines D and D1 utilize the same participle. Horning emphasizes that the central phrase is to be considered the focal point of the chiasm and consequently of the argument of the text as a whole--Jesus.¹

Though it remains a possibility,² it is not readily apparent that the author of Hebrews intends any chiastic structure in this passage. Indeed, the parallelism of the A and B elements does seem somewhat strained, as Horning admits with regard to the B elements. But chiasm or not, Horning correctly identifies the author's focus of attention in this passage--Jesus.

¹Ibid., pp. 40f.

²No other interpreters of this passage of Hebrews have regarded it as a chiasm. A. Vanhoye, La Structure Littéraire de l'Épître aux Hébreux, *Studia Neotestamentica I* (Paris, 1963), paid special attention to the chiastic formations within the Epistle to the Hebrews, but interestingly says nothing of one in Hb. 12:1, 2. One is inclined to think that Horning has been somewhat overzealous in her analysis of the structure of Hb. 12:1, 2.

C. Exhortation to Endurance and Agonistic Metaphor

In the early verses of Hb. 12 the author openly breaks forth as a preacher into the paraenesis prepared for in the preceding section which dramatically presented the need for a believing faithfulness (10:32-11:40). In his exhortation the author encourages himself and his readers to "run the race which lies before us with endurance." As evident elsewhere in Hebrews, the author orients his argumentation toward his dominant paraenetic concerns (4:14-16).

It is readily apparent that the author has, in his exhortation in 12:1-3, taken full advantage of the athletic imagery of the Greek 'Agon': δι' ὑπομονῆς τρέχωμεν τὸν προκείμενον ἡμῖν ἀγῶνα.¹ The terminology (τρέχωμεν τὸν ἀγῶνα) takes one immediately back to the ancient Greek stadium and to the foot races of the Olympiads, though the sense of τρέχειν in this passage is clearly not to be construed literally. Indeed, even in classical Greek the combination of τρέχειν with the object ἀγῶν was often figurative, referring to a race-like situation in which certain attitudes and attributes of the athlete or runner are desirable.² This is the sense of Hb. 12. The author envisions his readers' faith struggle in their "spiritual race" as analogous to the olympic athlete's efforts to perform adequately in his literal athletic contest. Indeed, as P. -G. Müller rightly

¹Agonistic imagery and terminology appear clearly in Hb. 12: 1-4 (τρέχω, ἀγῶν, ἀνταγωνίζομαι; cf. Hb. 10:32ff. ἄθλησις, θεατρίζομαι, 11:33 καταγωνίζομαι). V. C. Pfitzner, Paul and the Agon Motif (Leiden, 1967), whose authoritative analysis of the agonistic metaphor in the Pauline literature should be well noted, stresses that a strong paraenetic element is retained in all of Paul's Agon passages (p. 80). This paraenetic intention of Paul in his use of the agonistic metaphor is also clearly seen in Hb. 12:1ff.

²See Bauer, Greek-English Lexicon, p. 833; also O. Bauernfeind, "τρέχω," TDNT VIII, ed. G. Friedrich, trans. G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, 1972), pp. 226-35.

has observed: "die Mahnrede 12, 1-4 ist ganz vom Thema des Kampfes bestimmt."¹ In the following study various nuances of the Christian "Agon" which the author of Hebrews underscores,² will come to light, especially as they reflect on the author's description of Jesus' earthly life.

At the outset the nuance of a real personal struggle or straining to perform adequately in a contest is strongly retained by the author through his use of the phrase δι' ὑπομονῆς (ὑπέμεινεν , 12:2; ὑπομεμενηκότα , 12:3). Indeed, the centrality of ὑπομονή for Hebrews' paraenesis cannot be missed. For the author of Hebrews "endurance" represents a key ingredient for success in the spiritual "Agon" confronted (προκείμενον)³ by the Christian "Runner." The author's

¹Müller, XPICTOΣ APXHΓOΣ , pp. 303f. Müller particularly stresses the eschatological perspective in his understanding of Hebrews' approach to the "Glaubenskampf." Hebrews' readers have not yet entered into the "rest" stage, they must still struggle and endure in their faith during these "last days" (1:2). In Müller's words, the church then was on the look-out for one who could in their present stage be a leader and example. The author of Hebrews referred them to Jesus and his own earthly "Agon" of faith (pp. 306ff).

²E. Stauffer, "ἀγών ," TDNT, I, ed. G. Kittel, trans. G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, 1964), pp. 134-140, identifies five motifs of thought expressed through the larger "Agon" concept in primitive Christianity: (a) The goal can be reached only with maximal personal exertion; (b) Not only exertion, but rigid denial or denunciation is also required of the spiritual athlete; (c) The thought of antagonists is present (rare in the NT according to Stauffer); (d) Suffering which may or may not be consummated in martyrdom is the sharpest form of "Agon" for the Christian to undergo on earth; (e) The final goal for which the Christian fights, works and suffers is not limited to that individual's salvation alone, but also to the salvation of the larger Christian community, that is to say the real need to stand together in the "Agon" of faith. It is impossible to make judgments here concerning the validity or comprehensiveness of Stauffer's categories, nevertheless they may provide some helpful background to an investigation of the particular relevant themes raised in Hb. 12:1-3. Cf. Pfitzner, Agon Motif, pp. 193f.

³In Hb. 6:18 the author alluded to the hope "set-before" us (προκείμεαι). Here in Hb. 12 this characteristic phraseology of Hebrews occurs again as the "set-before-us" race (12:1) and the "set-before-him" joy (12:2) (προκείμεαι).

return to the endurance theme will call for further elaboration of this theme below.

At this point, the author of Hebrews elucidates various sources of encouragement for his readers in their "Agon" of faith.

1. Encouragement from "Witnesses" (ἔχοντες)

The author first calls upon the "cloud of witnesses surrounding us" (περικεείμενον ἡμῖν νέφος μαρτύρων) to reinvigorate his readers in their race of faith.

Though the imagery here immediately seems to suggest simply spectators in an amphitheatre surrounding the track where the athletes run, this bald reading does not fully reckon with this passage's context.

The concept of "witness" itself deserves a greater investigation than we are here able to give,¹ yet certain features of the nature of "witness" in Hb. 12 are worthy of brief note here. The inferential particle which began 12:1 immediately takes one back to the preceding chapter's catalogue of the heroes of faith drawn forth from the OT scriptures. Therefore, these heroes of faith constitute, for the author of Hebrews, the "witnesses" (μαρτύρων) who now

¹The most extensive recent treatment of the μάρτυς theme in the NT is A. A. Trites, The New Testament Concept of Witness, SNTS Monograph 31 (Cambridge, 1977). See also L. Coenen and A. A. Trites, "Witness, Testimony," NIDNTT III, ed. C. Brown (Exeter, 1978), pp. 1038-1051; H. Strathmann, "μάρτυς," TDNT IV, ed. G. Kittel, trans. G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, 1967), pp. 474-514. While the μάρτυς word group had not in the NT acquired the later "red" sense of "martyr," the context of Hb. 12 does link the concept of "witness" with the theme of faithful endurance in one's religious confession to the very end, despite possible suffering and opposition. Yet, as Strathmann rightly observed, in the NT one is a witness not because one dies (the later developed sense), but one dies because one is a witness. On this "witness" theme, see also T. W. Manson, "Martyrs and Martyrdom," BJRL 34 (1956-57), pp. 463-484, who traces the development of the meaning of μάρτυς. A word which originally had no connexion to suffering, μάρτυς gradually obtained that nuance through its close association with the OT prophets who suffered often because of their faithful "witness" to what God had revealed to them.

surround him and his readers.¹ In fact, these heroes of faith are "witnesses" since God himself has testified (μαρτυρηθέντες , 11:39) to their faith in the OT scriptures.² Yet more significantly for the author's purposes, these "witnesses" are not merely passive and uninvolved spectators, but those who have themselves an experiential knowledge of faith, having successfully completed their own course of faith.³ For Hebrews, therefore, these witnesses represent no lifeless and unrelated historical notation, but a dynamic and relevant example from which the present church may draw encouragement and inspiration in their present "Agon" of faith. While the athletic imagery of ranks of spectators in the amphitheatre cheering on runners remains intact,⁴ however it is vital to note that these particular "witnesses" also have an intimate relation to and a vital impact on the present participants in the "Agon."

2. Preparation through Renunciation (ἀποθέμενοι)

In the second major participial clause the author of Hebrews extends his agonistic metaphor by drawing attention to the athlete's training or preparation for his contest. In order to run his race with

¹Trites, Witness, pp. 220f.

²Cf. Hb. 11:2, 4, 5 (ἐμαρτυρήθησαν , ἐμαρτυρήθη , μεμαρτυρήται). Distinctively in the NT, the verb μαρτυρέω only occurs in the passive in Hebrews, with the clear impression being that God is the one who "witnesses" (in the sense of acknowledgment or commendation).

³Hb. 11 purposely presents the authentic and active character of the ancients' faith, frequently maintained in the face of suffering and severe trials.

⁴Strathmann, "μάγπος," p. 491, correctly maintains the basic sense of spectators who follow with avid interest the course of the runners as eye-witnesses (also note p. 491 n. 51; cf. Westcott, Hebrews, p. 391), yet the special nature of these "witnesses" as former participants in the "Agon" of faith must not go unnoticed for from Hebrews' paraenetic point of view it remains the single most important feature about this particular crowd of "witnesses."

endurance, he must lay aside or rid himself (ἀποθεμένοι)¹ of every kind of hindrance (ὄγκον),² especially one which would trip him up (εὐπερίστατον ἁμαρτίαν).³

Though the writer of Hebrews does not specify the exact character of these various encumbrances which are to be renounced, the application to the Christian's "Agon" of faith is plain enough. The Christian runner must put aside anything which might possibly hinder his progress in his Christian faith, especially personal sin which so easily entangles or distracts him.

3. Jesus--The Supreme Inspiration to Endurance (ἀφορῶντες)

With the third main participle (ἀφορῶντες)⁴ the author draws his readers' eyes again to Jesus. The author's image of Jesus and his way depicted in this participial phrase represents the most significant portion of his passage (12:1-3) for this present study's

¹Literally, ἀποτίθημι means the physical removal of something, usually clothing. The more figurative sense of putting aside what is undesirable or burdensome is fairly common in the NT (cf. Ro. 13:12; 1 Pt. 2:1).

²The root sense of ὄγκος is weight, bulk, size or mass (Bauer, Greek-English Lexicon, p. 555). The athletic imagery of this passage suggests the removal of superfluous weight or of any object, such as a robe or clothing, which would hinder one's complete freedom of movement. The writer of Hebrews does not specify his own spiritual understanding of this image, except for a generalized reference to "sin" in the following words. If the readers of Hebrews were in fact Greek speaking (Hellenistic) Jewish-Christians who were loath to separate themselves completely from their Jewish roots, it seems likely that the author of Hebrews in this passage may at least in part be suggesting that they divest themselves of those aspects of their Judaism which held them back in their Christian race of faith in Jesus Christ.

³The commentaries and lexicons discuss at length the origins and precise meaning of εὐπερίστατον (ad loc.). The best sense in the context appears to be that "sin" which "easily entangles," hinting at a more active hindering factor, not just a "dead weight." F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 350, suggests the sense of "distraction" as a possibility. But whatever the precise connotation, the basic sense of hindrance, of a negative factor, in the "Agon" of faith is clearly present.

⁴ἔχοντες, then ἀποθέμενοι, and now the last ἀφορῶντες.

particular interest in his conception and use of references to the earthly life of Jesus.

(a) Call to Consideration of "Jesus." The participle ἀφορῶντες in the present tense suggests figuratively a continual steady gaze, or a fixed and continuing consideration, of Jesus throughout the whole "Agon" of faith. Moffatt speaks of a "concentrated attention . . . with no eyes for any one or anything except Jesus."¹

The object Ἰησοῦν occurs in an emphatic position at the end of the clause, much as in the very similar clause in Hb. 3:1.² The author clearly wants to focus his readers' attention in a definite way on Jesus. Furthermore, it cannot be insignificant that the author in this passage utilizes the plain earthly cognomen "Jesus" with no further titles.³ Through the use of his earthly name "Jesus" the author suggests his humanity, while only the following context can substantiate this conclusion.⁴ In this way then, the author seeks to redirect his readers' attention away from their own "Agon" to a serious

¹Moffatt, Hebrews, pp. 195f. Moffatt documents some notable parallels to Hebrews use of ἀφορῶντες. Specifically, 4 Macc. 17:10f. presents a truly striking linguistic and ideological parallel as the author of 4 Maccabees directs his readers' attention (via an epitaph) to the martyrs (Eleazar, the mother and her seven sons), their own Godward gaze (ἀφορῶντες) and their endurance unto death (οἱ . . . θεὸν ἀφορῶντες, καὶ μέχρι θανάτου τὰς βασάνους ὑπομείναντες). The same sense of "concentrated attention" is present in Hb. 11:26 (ἀπέβλεπεν εἰς).

²Cf. 3:1, κατανοήσατε τὸν ἀπόστολον καὶ ἀρχιερέα. . . Ἰησοῦν.

³Note elsewhere in Hebrews: 2:9; 3:1; 6:20; 7:22; 10:19; 12:24; 13:12 (Cf. 4:14; 13:20).

⁴Müller, XPICTOΣ APXHΓOΣ, p. 302, strongly affirms that "wenn die Laufenden aufgefordert werden, auf Jesus zu schauen, so kann damit nur das persönliche Leidensschicksal des irdischen Jesus gemeint sein. . . . Der absolut gebrauchte Name "Jesus" steht für die irdische Existenz des historischen Jesus prägenden Ereignisse und Umstände, vor allem für sein Leiden und sein Durchhalten im Glauben." Cf. Westcott, Hebrews, p. 395; Montefiore, Hebrews, p. 214; and Michel, Hebräer (1975), p. 430 n. 6.

contemplation of Jesus' "Agon" in his own earthly life.

(b) Pioneer and Perfecter of Faith. In a phrase peculiar to himself in the NT the author of Hebrews now describes Jesus as τὸν τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτὴν .¹ While this unique appellation deserves extensive comment on its own, the present investigation must be limited to those aspects which throw a more direct light on the primary concern with Hebrews' understanding and use of references to Jesus' earthly life in his word of encouragement.

The key noun πίστεως² places this passage firmly into the context of Hb. 11 and its expanded explication of "faith." In context, πίστεως also carries with it the thought of faith's "witnesses"--a connexion explicitly made here by the author through the use of the key word μαρτύρων (12:1). As pointed out above, these "witnesses" were not merely spectators of faith, but participants who had actively experienced the race of faith.³ Therefore, the author, by the designation τὸν τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτὴν , firmly aligns Jesus with both the OT witnesses of Hb. 11 and also himself and his readership, who presently find themselves in the midst of their own "Agon" of faith. The unique double title for Jesus reflects upon the nature and significance of this alignment of faith.

¹In Hb. 2:10 the author links the term ἀρχηγός with the verb τελειῶσαι . Only a slight variation exists here with a similarly direct link to the noun τελειωτής .

²Müller, ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΡΧΗΓΟΣ , pp. 308f., correctly argues the syntactical linkage of the genitive τῆς πίστεως with both following nouns, referring then to both equally. The tendency in English translations to render the definite article in τῆς πίστεως as "our" faith seems an unjustified and unnecessary addition (e.g., AV, ARV, RSV, NIV). See the comments of F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 351 n. 35. Jesus is not the "Archegos" and "perfecter" of just Christians' faith, but of the faith of the OT saints as well. It is better to translate this phrase more generally as "pioneer and perfecter of faith."

³See above the comments in this present study on μαρτύρων .

The author first calls Jesus the "Archegos" of faith. In this study's earlier treatment of "Archegos" in Hb. 2:10,¹ a dissatisfaction with the translation "source" or "author" was indicated. It was argued there that the context of 2:10 demanded a less static and more active and dynamic understanding, such as "leader," "pioneer" or "trailblazer."² The connotation of active leadership and firstness was dominant. The context of 12:1-3 argues for a similarly active and dynamic understanding of the term in 12:2. The witnesses of Hb. 11 were actively engaged in their struggle of faith. Theirs was a faith which held onto God's promise despite discouraging circumstances, hoping in the God who raises the dead (11:19). Their faith was evident in perseverance in faithfulness and obedience through dark nights of suffering, though never "seeing" their goal (οὐ βλέπομένων , 11:1). Their "faith" was seen in their resolute personal determination to obey God in their lives, to stand for the promise of God throughout earthly sufferings, mistreatment, torture and even unto death itself (11:32-38). The witnesses of Hb. 11 possessed a faith which was above all else dynamic and active in their human existence. It was never merely conceived of in an abstract or intellectual manner. Hughes terms Hebrews' concept of "faith" as a "believing faithfulness," a confession of faith and beliefs, yes, but one which issued naturally in certain behavioural or character qualities--especially in "endurance" (ὑπομονή).³ In

¹A cataloguing of resources consulted on ἀρχηγός in this present study has already been compiled. See above relevant section on Hb. 2:10, pp. 48ff.

²F. Laub, Bekenntnis, pp. 155f., argues for a strongly activist sense for ἀρχηγός in Hb. 12:2 as well. Laub draws attention to the soteriological significance of ἀρχηγός seen especially in Hb. 2:10 where Jesus plays an active role in the bringing of many sons to glory--a perspective on Jesus as "Archegos" which clearly emphasizes his uniqueness.

³G. Hughes, Hebrews and Hermeneutics, p. 79.

Hb. 12:1-3 the immediate context of "Archegos" emphatically presents Jesus' faithfulness despite harsh opposition (12:3) and his endurance of the cross (12:2) at the close of his own earthly "Agon" of faith. An active and dynamic sense of "leadership" or "pioneering" would therefore appropriate in this present context.

Therefore, when the author names Jesus the "Archegos" of faith, he implies that Jesus is the first--and hence unique--in a chain of many witnesses to faith. Jesus was for the author of Hebrews the supreme exemplar of the kind of faith he speaks of in Hb. 11. Jesus, it has been said, is the one who is par excellence "the faithful witness" (Rev. 1:5).¹ In fact, Jesus as "Archegos," in the author's understanding, even precedes the witnesses of Hb. 11 along the way of faith (11:39, 40).² The relevant motifs of the "way" (τρέχωμεν , 12:1) and the "race" (ἀγῶνα , 12:1) also decisively present an image of Jesus the "Archegos" as one who especially through his earthly life and death on the cross has gone before his people leading them toward their goal.

The author also here refers to Jesus as the "perfecter" (τελειωτής) of faith. Though the noun τελειωτής occurs here alone in the NT, we have already examined a part of the sizable scholarly literature pertaining to the τέλειος word group so characteristic of Hebrews.³ In the previous examination of the cognate verb τελειῶσαι

¹F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 351. Bruce also alludes to Rev. 3:14 where Jesus is referred to as ὁ Ἀμὴν, ὁ μάρτυς ὁ πιστὸς καὶ ἀληθινός.

²Ibid. Alluding to Jude 5 and 1 Cor. 10:3f., Bruce writes: "Jesus . . . is perhaps envisaged here as having led all the people of God, from earliest times along the path of faith, although since His incarnation and passion, His personal example makes His leadership available to His people in a way that was impossible before."

³A catalogue of certain reference works on the τέλειος word group and theme in Hebrews has already been compiled above in the relevant section on Hb. 2:10, pp. 50f. n. 4.

in Hb. 2:10 it was established that the basic sense of this term was "to bring to an end," "to complete," or "to bring to its goal." It was also noted that the precise sense of the term will depend on the immediate context.

The remarks immediately above regarding the context of πίστews ἀρχηγόν correspondingly then also point strongly toward a dynamic and active conception of πίστews τελειωτήν in 12:2.¹ Jesus, as the "perfecter" of faith, is the one who has completed the "Agon" of faith. Through his own struggle while on earth Jesus pursued the course of faith to its end and in him the promises to which faith clings are brought to fulfillment. As in Hb. 2:10 and 5:8, 9, here in Hb. 12:2 Jesus' way similarly leads through an earthly struggle with suffering to fulfillment in an eschatological exaltation.² However, the author in speaking of Jesus as "perfecter" of faith does not refer exclusively to Jesus' "fulfillment" as his exalted state, nor simply to a state of cultic purity and consecration,³ but to a perfecting or fulfilling or

¹M. Silva, "Perfection and Eschatology in Hebrews," West Th J 39 (1976), pp. 60-71, argues persuasively that the strong parallels between the τέλειος words in 2:10, 5:9 and 12:2 requires a similar interpretation. Silva again argues that the primary sense is that of eschatological "fulfillment," with the nuances of "glorification" and the cultic consecration perspective relegated to a secondary significance. Silva, p. 68, concludes: "The writer of Hebrews is unwilling to call the Mosaic economy perfect, not because there was anything intrinsically wrong with it, but because in the divine argument it was designed as a shadow, anticipating the substance. The substance, therefore, far from opposing the shadow, is its fulfillment--this is perfection!" Jesus, therefore, becomes not only the one in whom faith is fulfilled, brought to its proper divinely intended conclusion and completion, but also the one who because he is the completer or fulfiller of faith inaugurates a new era in which the promises of God have in fact been received in Jesus. And these promises may now in a proleptic manner be realized as an eschatological hope by his people when they fix their gaze upon him and follow in his path, a path which leads through suffering and humiliation on to exaltation.

²Note especially Silva's helpful diagram ("Perfection," p. 66).

³Cf. Delling, "τέλος," pp. 86f.

completing process which dynamically involved Jesus' whole human way of life, particularly his earthly endurance of hostilities culminating in his crucifixion (12:2); a process which then reaches its ultimate goal in exaltation at the right hand of God. The primitive christological pattern of humiliation-exaltation so characteristic of this epistle is once again clearly manifest. Indeed, the absolute necessity of Jesus' human experience of faith features strongly in this passage. As P. -G. Müller notes:

Jesus hat in Analogie zum Glauben der Zeugenwolke die äusserste Not menschlicher Glaubenserfahrung durchmachen müssen, um ans Ziel zu gelangen. . . . Der Glaube ist hier eine Aktivität Jesu in Analogie zum glaubensgemässen Durchhalten der Zeugenwolke.¹

This, in fact, corresponds precisely with the thought of the author expressed elsewhere in his word of exhortation (2:17-18; 4:15-16; 5:8-9).

In light of the context in which ἀρχηγός and τελειωτής are so intimately connected, being linked by a common article (τόν) and genitive attribute (τῆς πίστεως), τελειωτής then also refers strongly to the personal way of faith of Jesus. Through his active faithfulness and obedience Jesus has both led his people in the way of faith as "Archegos," and has completed the way of faith as τελειωτής. The connexion of this double title of Jesus to his earthly passion upon the cross (σταυρός, 12:2) cannot be overlooked.² In conjunction with Hb. 11 it requires a personal and dynamic interpretive perspective on these terms. It thereby also has made the intended paraenetic impact

¹Müller, XPICTOZ APXHΓOZ, p. 309.

²Müller, XPICTOZ APXHΓOZ, pp. 307f., strongly emphasizes this connexion to what he terms a "Kurzpensionsgeschichte." He comments on p. 312: "Der Kontext der vier Ἀρχηγός -Stellen im NT zeigte sich jeweils als 'Kurzpensionsgeschichte.' Nur von diesen Rahmen her kann der Sinn der christologischen Anführerprädikation bestimmt werden: Jesus ist Ἀρχηγός, weil er dies durch sein Leiden und seinen Tod, durch seine Auferstehung und Erhöhung geworden ist."

of the author's words plain, since it so clearly links Jesus' own human struggle of faith with that of the Christian reader presently struggling in his own "Agon" of faith.

Indeed, the conception of Christ as the great example for faith leaps to one's attention. Yet the author has not merely presented a simplistic imitatio Christi theme to his readers. The uniqueness and once-for-all(ἐφ' ἅπαξ)¹ character of Jesus and his death for all (Hb. 2:9, 10) must never be ignored, since it is so deeply engrained into the christology of Hebrews as a whole.² If Jesus as "Archegos" is the pioneer in the way of faith leading to God's presence, his uniqueness as the one who precedes all others--thus in a sense, creating the way for them as its inaugurator--is also maintained. H. Anderson, alluding also back to the allied concept in 6:20 of Jesus as πρόδρομος ("fore-runner"), emphasizes the uniqueness and once-for-all nature of Jesus' life and death in Hebrews' christology.³ He summarizes the matter well:

This (uniqueness) has to be borne in mind when we come to Hebrews 12:2, where Christ seems to be held forth as the great exemplar of faith, toward whom the eyes and hearts of the Christian community, living under the hardships of this present time, are to be lifted up, and where the Church's service and obedience seem to consist in an imitatio Christi. . . . If we give to the "once-for-all" of Hebrews the central place it deserves, we shall not readily misconstrue the Church's service and obedience in terms of her need or capacity to do over again what he has achieved for us. Never in that sense could we imitate him. Rather the faithfulness of discipleship is possible for the Church only because he has done uniquely and finally what he has done.⁴

¹This term, so characteristic of Hebrews' theological perspective on Christ, occurs in 7:27; 9:12 and 10:10.

²It is, in fact, the heart of Hebrews' argument for the supremacy of Jesus' high priestly ministry and sacrifice (7:27 and 10:10f).

³H. Anderson, Jesus and Christian Origins, pp. 286ff.

⁴Ibid., pp. 287.

To be sure, the author of Hebrews aligns Jesus with the νέφος μαρτύρων of Hb. 11. Yet their's was a way of faith marred by faltering, imperfection and sin, whereas Jesus never once wavered from the perfect course of a faithful obedience to God. In fact, it may be rightly said that apart from the "pioneer" (ἀρχηγός), there can be no path; apart from the "perfector" (τελειωτής), there can be no victorious fulfillment. Therefore, we must always in Hebrews properly grant the utterly unique nature of Jesus and his "Agon" of faith.¹

Nevertheless, in an acutely felt tension the author of Hebrews characteristically speaks in the same breath of Jesus as part of the faith community (Hb. 2:13). In his earthly way of faith Jesus is so closely aligned with that of the νέφος μαρτύρων and present Christian people, that he is held forth as the supreme source of inspiration for Christians to continue running their present race of faith. This is the clear emphasis given to this unique title of Jesus by the passion context in 12:2. As has been seen elsewhere in this study, the alignment of Jesus with his people is characterized by this tension between uniqueness and unity, between the discontinuity and continuity of Jesus with his people.²

(c) The Cross of Jesus. With the relative clause ὅς ἀντὶ τῆς προκειμένης αὐτῷ χαρᾶς ὑπεμείνεν σταυρὸν αἰσχύνης καταφρονήσας

¹Anderson, Jesus and Christian Origins, pp. 286f., rightly emphasizes this point. O. Cullmann, Christology, p. 100, puts it well when he says: "An imitation of Christ is possible only when we are first of all aware of the fact that we are not able to imitate him." Cf. Michel, "Vollkommenheit," pp. 351f.; E. Schweizer, Lordship and Discipleship, p. 90.

²Laub, Bekenntnis, pp. 155f., rightly acknowledges that the sense of Jesus as the paradigm of faith for the church is stronger in 12:2 than 2:10--though the terminological similarities between the two passages are remarkably strong. Nevertheless, as Laub admits at the same time, "hebt die Bezeichnung ἀρχηγός καὶ τελειωτής Jesus über die blosse Beispielhaftigkeit qualitativ hinaus" (p. 156).

the author firmly fixes his readers' eyes on Jesus and his cross. At the mention of Jesus' σταυρός the author dramatically directs his readers' eyes toward the crux event in the earthly faith "Agon" of Jesus.¹ With this plain reference to the cross of Jesus the author of Hebrews draws upon his knowledge of Jesus' earthly way as a critical element in his teaching and paraenesis.

Significantly, the author states that Jesus "endured" (ὑπέμεινεν) the cross.² The aorist tense points toward the completed nature of this event.³ This corresponds well with Hebrews' once-for-all emphasis vis-a-vis the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross.⁴ Yet more interestingly, the opening exhortation of 12:1 uses the cognate noun ὑπομονῆς . Linguistically, therefore, the author even more clearly links Jesus and his people together in the "Agon" of faith. Those who are encouraged to run the race of faith with "endurance" are now pointed clearly to Jesus who in his own earthly "Agon" of faith "endured" the σταυρός. This "endurance" connexion could not have been overlooked by the Christian readers of Hebrews. In fact, it is reinforced by an additional reference to Jesus' "enduring" (ὑπομένεν-γκότα) of hostilities against himself from sinners (12:3). In the context of the agonistic metaphor in 12:1-3 ὑπομένειν speaks of that concentrated perseverance necessary for an athlete to finish his race

¹This is, somewhat surprisingly, the only use of the word σταυρός in Hebrews.

²The apostle Paul never once speaks of Christ "enduring" (ὑπομένω) the cross. Hebrews' choice of vocabulary at this point clearly reflects on his abiding paraenetic concern (perseverance/endurance in the Christian "Agon" of faith) in this passage.

³There is a distinct and notable contrast between the aorist tense of ὑπέμεινεν and the perfect continuous tense of κεκάθικεν.

⁴Note especially Hb. 10:10; cf. 7:27; 9:12.

and win the prize. The Christian's concentration should therefore be fixed on Jesus (ἀφορῶντες), whose endurance of the cross and consequent attainment of a joyful goal (προκειμένης αὐτῷ χαρᾶς) is the supreme encouragement for the Christian athlete in his present struggle to endure.

The author of Hebrews underlines two further perspectives on Jesus' endurance of the cross. First, the σταυρός was clearly considered a shameful manner of death. In this passage Jesus is said to have endured the cross, "despising (thinking nothing of) the shame" (αἰσχύνῃς καταφρονήσας)¹ associated with it by the world. Indeed, the cross was widely considered fitting only for the lowest elements of society, a well documented fact of the first century world.² The author of Hebrews clearly desires that his readers perceive the profound reality and depth of Jesus' humiliation, that any humiliation they were now facing should in no way deter them from faithful endurance in their Christian confession.

Second, the author suggests a motivation for endurance in faith. Jesus endured the cross with his own eyes steadily fixed on the "joyful goal" set before him (ἀντὶ τῆς προκειμένης αὐτῷ χαρᾶς). The exact sense of this phrase remains in dispute due to the ambiguous sense of ἀντί. It may either mean "instead of," or "for the sake

¹A notable parallel of Hebrews with the Maccabean martyrs of 4 Maccabees is this concept of "despising" one's sufferings. The seven brothers remain loyal to God and "despised their troubles, even unto death" (εἰ δὲ τοίνυν τῶν μέχρι θανάτου πόνων ὑπερεφρόνησαν οἱ ἑπτὰ ἀδελφοί , 4 Macc. 13:1). Cf. 4 Macc. 6:9 (ὁ δὲ ὑπέμενε τοὺς πόνους , καὶ περιεφρόνει τῆς ἀνάγκης); 14:1 (περιφρονῆσαι); 14:11 and 16:2 (ὑπερεφρόνησεν).

²See the relevant section of J. Schneider, " σταυρός ," TDNT VII, ed. G. Friedrich, trans. G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, 1971), pp. 572-584; also E. Brandenburger, "Cross, Wood, Tree," NIDNTT I, ed. C. Brown (Grand Rapids, 1975), pp. 389-405.

of."¹ Though we shall not digress over much at this point to delineate the various arguments and their precise interpretational nuances,² the participle *προκειμένου* with its future perspective argues strongly in favour of the sense "for the sake of."³ Furthermore, the

¹Bauer, Greek-English Lexicon, pp. 72f., notes a variety of possibilities, himself preferring "instead of." In Hb. 12:16 the author of Hebrews clearly uses *ὑπὲρ* in the sense "for the sake of."

²Michel, Hebräer (1975), pp. 434f., presents an excellent summary of the history of interpretation of *ὑπὲρ* in Hb. 12:2. Michel himself argues for the sense "for the sake of." Others who support Michel's position are F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 353 n. 45; N. R. Lightfoot, Jesus Christ Today: A Commentary on the Book of Hebrews (Grand Rapids, 1976), pp. 243f.; Windisch, Hebräerbrief, pp. 109f. Cp. Montefiore, Hebrews, p. 214, and Delitzsch, Hebrews II, p. 239, who argues for the sense "instead of," linking Hb. 12:2 with the self-emptying of Jesus spoken of in Phil. 2:6ff. The most extensive argument for "instead of" is that of J. B. Nisius, "Zur Erklärung von Hebr 12,2," BiblZeit 14 (1917), pp. 44-61. P. Andriessen and A. Lenglet, "Quelques passages difficiles de l'Épître aux Hébreux," Biblica 51 (1970), pp. 207-220, reinforce Nisius' argument and support the sense "renouncing the joy that was his, Christ endured the cross." They cite for support the dominant NT sense of *ὑπὲρ* as "instead of," certain Patristic evidence and Latin versions which favour the sense "instead of," and finally the impropriety of speaking of Jesus seeking his own "joy" within the theology of Hebrews. According to Andriessen and Lenglet, Jesus renounces his privilege of divinity, his "joy," first at his incarnation and then finally when he decided to endure the shame of the cross. P. E. Bonnard, "La traduction de Hébreux 12:2: 'C'est en vue de la joie que Jésus endura la croix,'" NouvRev Theol 97 (1975), pp. 415-423, examines the arguments of Andriessen and Lenglet and regards them as inadequate and forced. As near to Hb. 12:2 as Hb. 12:16 is an example of *ὑπὲρ* used in the sense "for the sake of." As well, the wider context of Hb. 12:2 links an expectation of future reward or blessing to faithfulness (see above in this study's argument). According to Bonnard, the "joy" set before Jesus, "for the sake of" which he endured the cross, was God's redemptive love for his people brought to fruition via the faithful obedience of Jesus on the cross. See also Andriessen's response to Bonnard in the same journal, "Renonçant à la joie qui lui revenait," NouvRevTheol 97 (1975), pp. 424-438.

³The race of faith which "lies before" (*προκειμένου* 12:1) the readers of Hebrews suggests strongly a future running. They yet need to endure in that "Agon." Indeed, as D. Hagner, Hebrews, A Good News Commentary (San Francisco, 1983), p. 197, points out: "The stress on the future hope of the Christian is exactly the point that the author has made to his readers throughout the preceding chapter, and that he wishes to underline here." Michel, Hebräer (1975), p. 435, also refers to the firmly future sense of *προκειμένου* in Hb. 12:2. Cf. Moffatt, Hebrews, p. 196; Windisch, Hebräerbrief, pp. 109f.

wider context of Hebrews tends to support this translation. According to Hb. 2:9-10, Jesus' suffering and death consequently result in his own unique exaltation and the related exaltation of many sons to glory. In Hb. 10:34ff. the author alludes to the proper forward gaze of the Christian toward the rich reward of receiving God's promises. In Hb. 11 Abraham was motivated by his forward look to the heavenly city of God (11:10). The faith-witnesses' eyes were fixed on the hope of a better land ahead (11:16). And of Moses the author writes: "He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasure of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward" (11:26). Finally, in the humiliation-exaltation christology of Hebrews Jesus' exaltation to God's right hand as the "Archegos" of salvation and the great high priest was the future result of Jesus' obedient endurance of suffering and death (2:9ff.; 4:15-16; 5:8-9). Here then in Hb. 12:2 it may be said that the joy of his expected exaltation in God's presence as the "Archegos" and "perfecter" of faith is the joyful goal which motivated Jesus to endure the suffering of the cross. For Jesus, Hebrews argues, the "Agon" of faith leads through suffering to exaltation.

The tension in the antithesis of "cross" and "joy" in this passage underlines the author's intended paraenetic impact. As P. -G. Müller argues,¹ the church of Hebrews needed to understand itself not as in a time of rest, but in the midst of an eschatological struggle which called for an obedient endurance of suffering.² The

¹Müller, XPICTOZ APXHΓOZ, pp. 306f.

²F. Hauck, "μένω," TDNT IV, ed. G. Kittel, trans. G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, 1967), pp. 574-588, comments that ὑπομένειν is most often used in the OT (LXX) in the phrase "to wait on God." He writes: "The general concept of pious waiting on God takes on particular force in eschatological thinking. God will fulfill the promise of eschatological salvation. Israel and the righteous wait expectantly for this decisive action of God (Hab. 2:3; Is. 25:9 vl.; 49:23 vl.; 51:5). Those who endure and reach the final fulfilment will be saved (Da. 12:12;

Christian, in the agonistic metaphor, is the spiritual athlete who, as long as he lives in this existence, is like the athlete who stands between the starting post and the goal. He, therefore, must persevere in the race of faith in order to reach the goal. For the church at this stage the author holds out Jesus as their leader and model. In Müller's words: "Christus ist der eschatologische Anführer der Gemeinde, der sich in einer Glaubensauseinandersetzung bis aufs Blut zum Heil der Auferstehung durchgekämpft hat."¹ The author of Hebrews in this way encourages his Christian readers to endure likewise their own "crosses" of suffering in their own "Agon" of faith by drawing upon a similar (though not exact) eschatological source of motivation for endurance, namely for the sake of the "joy" which also lay before them. But for the Christian runner now, Jesus himself has become their eschatological source of motivation. The Christian's eyes are to be fixed on Jesus himself who stands for them as the living hope, the "guarantee of a better covenant" (7:22), and the fulfillment of

Zech. 6:14). . . . This OT use of ὑπομονή carries with it a shift of content as compared with the current use in secular Greek. Attention is not directed earthwards to hostile powers which one resists, nor does the one who endures draw the power of resistance from within himself. The point of nerving oneself is to hold fast to God and not to mistake His power and faithfulness. This divinely oriented ὑπομονή is also an active attitude full of the strongest inner tension. It is manly perseverance. . . . OT ὑπομονή issues almost wholly in hope. What sustains the righteous is that God will establish justice and reward righteousness" (p. 584). For the readers of Hebrews there is a clear consistence with the picture of "endurance" which Hauck spells out. In particular, the Christian who will endure is the one who orients his mind and heart toward Jesus who sits at the right hand of God. The interesting thing in Hebrews is that the divine exalted Lord Jesus is inextricably linked in this passage in Hebrews to the humiliated earthly Jesus in his human way of suffering. It would be particularly true of Hebrews to say that the action "endurance" spoken of there is an active attitude full of acute inner tension in the life of the one called to endure. The eschatological look of the Christian to the sure hope and reward awaiting him when he, like Jesus, endures to the end, also parallels the OT eschatological perspective on "endurance."

¹Müller, XPICTOΣ APXHΓOΣ, p. 307.

the joyful promise of God. For the Christian, the Jesus who faithfully endured the cross and sits at God's right hand himself stands as the living embodiment of and guarantor of the joyful hope set before them.¹

(d) The Wreath of Glory. The formulaic expression ἐν δεξιᾷ . τε τοῦ θρόνου τοῦ θεοῦ κεκάθικεν rings once again the familiar tones in Hebrews of Ps. 110:1.² The perfect tense of κεκάθικεν suggests that Jesus had taken this seat in the past and continues now in that place of exaltation.³

Within the athletic metaphor of this passage the exaltation of Jesus might correspond to the wreath of glory bequeathed upon the victor of the race.⁴ Then too, the sense of a confident expectation of "reward" (μισθοποδοσία , 11:26) may also exist here in the context. This would seem particularly true if one understands "the joy which lay before" Jesus as his future exaltation with all the related redemptive aspects of that exalted position. Given the paraenetic context of Hb. 12:1ff., the author of Hebrews appears to be saying to his readers: 'If Jesus endured the cross in his race of faith and was therefore raised up by God, so too now you may confidently expect a similar divine vindication, if you likewise endure to the end in your own "Agon" of faith.' Yet it must quickly be added that Hebrews never loses sight of Jesus' uniqueness, for only Jesus can be said to "sit

¹Though Jesus stands with the community of faith as one who in his own "Agon" of faith needed to trust in God, and endure to the end in that trust, Jesus also becomes the object of his people's gaze of faith. In a sense, Jesus, as the "Archegos" and "perfecter" of faith, himself becomes the "joy" set before the community of faith.

²Cf. Hb. 1:3; 8:1; 10:12.

³Interestingly, all the remaining references to Ps. 110:1 in Hebrews use the aorist form of the verb ἐκάθισεν.

⁴See Pfitzner, Agon Motif, pp. 153.

down" in God's presence, while the angels (1:14) and even the greatest of the heroes of faith (Moses, 3:1-6; 11:24-28) are but "servants" in the house of God.

(e) A Final Call to Consider Jesus' Endurance. With the athletic metaphor yet pertaining, the author in 12:3 calls his readers to a sober contemplation (ἀναλογίσασθε)¹ of Jesus and his endurance despite obstacles. The imperative ἀναλογίσασθε² in fact means more than a simple consideration of Jesus. It has a comparative connotation which suggests that the readers of Hebrews calculate and compare Jesus' way of suffering and faithful endurance with their own.

The endurance (ὑπομεμενηκότα) motif³ once again underlines the dominant paraenetic concern of the author. For a church which was, metaphorically speaking, in danger of collapsing on the track (ἵνα μὴ κάμητε ταῖς ψυχαῖς ὑμῶν ἐκλυόμενοι),⁴ the inspiration from Jesus' endurance in the face of far greater opposition was a needed pastoral tonic.

The reference to τοιαύτην . . . ὑπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτωλῶν εἰς ἑαυτὸν ἀντιλογίαν presents some exegetical and textual⁵ difficulties.

¹At this point the author of Hebrews drops the visionary language of "looking" to Jesus (ἀφορῶντες, 12:2) and adopts a more contemplative approach.

²This verb occurs here only in the NT (ἀναλογίζομαι). F. Bleek, Hebräer II2, pp. 867f., notes numerous classical examples, many of which illustrate the comparison connotation of ἀναλογίζομαι (cf. Westcott, Hebrews, p. 397).

³Cf. ὑπομονῆς, 12:1; ὑπέμεινεν, 12:2; and ὑπομεμενηκότα, 12:3. In Hb. 12:7 the author expands his word of exhortation, telling his readers to "endure" their struggles as a divine discipline or instruction (εἰς παιδείαν ὑπομένετε). In Hb. 10:32 the author reminds his readers how they themselves in earlier days had "endured" in their Christian struggle despite sufferings (ὑπεμείνατε παθημάτων).

⁴Both κάμητε and ἐκλυόμενοι strongly imply a dangerous sense of weariness in the readers.

⁵Textually, εἰς ἑαυτόν is suspect. The variant εἰς ἑαυτοὺς

The literal sense of verbal opposition for ἀντιλογία is construed more broadly here in the sense of hostility or opposition in general. But questions concerning the precise nature of τοιαύτη ἀντιλογία are more difficult. Certainly Jesus endured ἀντιλογία throughout his earthly life, so the reference here may be to the general opposition and suffering Jesus encountered throughout his life climaxing on the cross. Michel comments: "Aber nicht nur die Leidenszeit, sondern seine ganze Geschichte ist voll von Widerspruch und Widerstand der Sünder."¹ Others, however, suggest that the immediate context with its echoes of σταυρός and αἰσχύνη (12:2) limits the sense of τοιαύτη ἀντιλογία to the cross and its shame, or to the singular hostility Jesus endured during passion week.² Regardless of the precise sense intended by the author, ultimately unknowable, an emphasis on Jesus' real experience of antagonism and suffering, climaxing in his cruci-

(or αὐτοῦς) possesses a far superior textual attestation. If εἰς ἑαυτοῦς is accepted on the principle of lectio difficilior, the best interpretation would be in line with Num. 16:38 (17:3 LXX), and possibly Prov. 8:36, in which sinners hurt themselves by their opposition to God's will. This position is favoured by such as Peake, Hebrews, p. 226; Westcott, Hebrews, p. 397; and Montefiore, Hebrews, p. 216, among modern commentators. Yet, this interpretation appears strained and discordant in the context of Hb. 12:1ff. For this reason, the much smoother reading εἰς ἑαυτόν is preferred by a vast majority of interpreters today (e.g., Windisch, Hebräerbrief, p. 110; Moffatt, Hebrews, p. 198; F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 345; Rignenbach, Hebräer, p. 392; Michel, Hebräer (1975), p. 436; B. Metzger, Textual Commentary, p. 675, et al). Typical of the comments of this latter group, Rignenbach, Hebräer, p. 392 n. 34, says of the plural variant: "Schlechterdings sinnlosen Variante εἰς αὐτοῦς oder ἑαυτοῦς verdient."

¹Michel, Hebräer (1975), p. 436. See also the speculative comment of Cullmann, Christology, p. 97: "It is not certain whether the author of Hebrews really had at his disposal a tradition independent of the Gospels we know. But another passage in Hebrews also suggests that he might have known definite facts preserved only by oral tradition. In 12.3 he writes, 'Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or faint-hearted.' Of course this could refer to one of the episodes reported in the canonical Gospels."

²Rignenbach, Hebräer, p. 392 n. 38; cf. Moffatt, Hebrews, p. 198.

fixion, is unmistakable.

Jesus' faithful endurance in the face of unsurpassable hostility and suffering at the hands of God's enemies (ἁμαρτωλῶν)¹ was held up as a source of inspiration and hope for readers now meeting similar antagonism in their own situation. However, a sense of warning, as well as encouragement, is perceptible in this passage. The Christian athlete who has entered the course and begun to run must persevere. He dare not give up (ἐκλυόμενοι), even though it means suffering, until he reaches the goal. The prize surely awaits him ahead, but now he must endure to the end, as Jesus did, in order to obtain it.

IV. Background

We will discuss briefly the possible influence of two familiar Greek conceptual frameworks for Hebrews' presentation of Jesus in his earthly life in Hb. 12:1-3.

A. The Paideia Tradition in Hellenistic-Judaism

As noted in the discussion of Hb. 5:7-10 above, the so-called "paideia tradition" in the classical Greek writers and also in Philo had a predominantly 'learn-from-your-mistakes' sense which was most applicable to those too dull to learn in any other way.²

While the basic Greek sense of suffering as educative and bettering for a man remains intact, Hellenistic-Jewish martyrological literature such as 2 Macc. 6:18-7:42 and 4 Macc. reinterpreted this paideia tradition's understanding of a suffering which somehow leads

¹The identity of these "sinners" is left indeterminate by the author of Hebrews.

²For an additional discussion of the "paideia tradition," see earlier in this present study the appropriate pages and notes in chapter 4 on Hb. 5:7-9.

to betterment along these basic lines: (a) . Suffering is regarded as part of an educational process instituted by God for his own merciful purposes, a process perfectly in line with God's larger will and therefore "fitting" (2:10); (b) . Suffering or humiliation is voluntarily accepted as an integral part of a complete faithfulness and obedience to God and His ways; (c) . The one who faithfully endures suffering for God's sake shall receive a divine vindication or exaltation (2 Macc. 7; 4 Macc. 17:18); (d) . Finally, the one who faithfully endures divine paideia is held up as a paradigmatic hero, an example for others to emulate.

The writer of 2 Macc. 6-7 presents suffering as evidence of God's merciful disciplining of his people, not allowing them to sink too far into sin without a firm warning (2 Macc. 6:12-17). The martyr Eleazar refuses to compromise, voluntarily enduring suffering (6:19, 23) for the sake of a godly fear (6:30) and supreme regard for God's law (6:28; 7:2, 9, 11, 23, 30). The expectation of vindication and exaltation by God after faithfully enduring suffering is also clear in 2 Macc. 7:9-14.¹ Finally, the paraenetic intent of the paideia tradition is underlined when Eleazar the martyr is presented as an "example" (ὑπόδειγμα , 6:28, 31), a hero for the youth and the nation of Israel to emulate. The later expanded and more philosophical explication of this martyrology as seen in 4 Maccabees still retains the paideia tradition perspective of the briefer account in 2 Macc. 6-7.² This

¹The martyrs of 2/4 Maccabees also look forward with relish to the severe judgment God would deliver against their tormentors (2 Macc. 7:14, 19, 31-36).

²The martyrology in 2 Macc. 6:18-7:42 is regarded as the more straightforward, briefer and earlier account (perhaps as early as 100 B.C.). 4 Maccabees is a later and expanded martyrology (A.D. 18-37 approximately). The reference in 4 Macc. 4:2 to Apollonius as "governor of Syria and Phoenicia and Cilicia" is highly significant since Cilicia was connected administratively to Syria and Phoenicia only for

becomes clearest in the words of one of the seven brother martyrs:

διὰ παιδείαν καὶ ἀρετὴν θεοῦ ταῦτα πάσχομεν (4 Macc. 10:10).

The examination above of Hb. 5:7-10 noted the probable linguistic and interpretive influence of the so-called paideia tradition on Hebrews' explanation of Jesus' sufferings. L. K. K. Dey sees this influence in Hb. 12:1-11 as well.¹ But while the application of this paideia tradition to Jesus is less than explicit in Hb. 12:1-3, the application to the readers of Hebrews is made quite explicit.²

The νέφος μαρτύρων of Hb. 11, which probably includes these very Maccabean martyrs (Hb. 11:35),³ includes Jesus himself as its most prominent member. Often for these faithful witnesses the way of faith in God required the faithful endurance of sufferings. Jesus' innocent suffering on the cross (12:2) which had been set before him in his way of faith was the supreme example of faithful endurance. Jesus too looked forward to God's vindication of his faithful obedience, exalting him to his right hand. And Jesus also is set forth for

the brief period between A.D. 18-55; further, Caligula's incredibly vicious persecutions in the period A.D. 38-39 suggest a date prior to that time for 4 Maccabees since those who hear the tale of the martyrs of 4 Maccabees find it hard to believe their ears concerning the cruelty of Antiochus (4 Macc. 14:9), a comment difficult to make after Caligula's display of viciousness), probably depends on the briefer account in 2 Maccabees. It highly embellishes the story of Eleazar and his fellow martyrs. Most notably different than 2 Macc. 6-7 is 4 Maccabees' philosophical frame of mind, pointing in particular to the primacy of "reason" (4 Macc. 1:16-17), often called also "religious wisdom" (ὁ εὐσεβὴς λογισμός, 1:1; 7:16; 13:1; 15:23; 16:1; 18:2).

¹Dey, Patterns of Perfection, p. 224.

²The key terminological connexions to the "paideia tradition" present in Hb. 5:7 (ἐμαθεν - ἐπαθεν) are absent vis-a-vis Jesus in Hb. 12:1-3. In Hb. 12:4-11 the use of παιδεία / παιδεύω occurs explicitly in reference to the Christian readers of Hebrews, and by implication in reference back to Jesus. The reverse is the case in Hb. 5:7f.

³The verb ἐτυμπανίσθησαν in Hb. 11:35 is the Greek verb for torture on the rack, stretched out over a drum (τύμπανον) like an animal skin and then beaten to death. Spitting out the unclean meat forcibly jammed into his mouth, Eleazar is led to the τύμπανον (2 Macc. 6:19; cf. 6:28).

readers as the supreme model for faith. In addition to this correspondence, the profuse use of paideia terminology in Hb. 12:4-11¹ strongly argues that the paideia tradition of Hellenistic-Judaism has exerted some influence upon Hebrews' formulation in 12:1-11.

Nevertheless, the marked emphasis in Hb. 12:1-3 on Jesus' utter uniqueness as the only "Archegos" and "perfector" of faith precludes any possible misunderstanding of Jesus as simply another inspiring Jewish martyr-example for God's people. As the "Archegos" and "perfector" of faith, and as the one who sits down at God's right hand, Jesus also stands apart from all other "sons of God" (Hb. 12:4-11) for whom the paideia of the Lord through hardships is to be cherished.

B. Agonistic Metaphor in Hb. 12:1-3

The use of the agonistic metaphor has already been noted in Hb. 12:1-3. This agonistic imagery had a wide currency both inside and outside the NT.² Within the NT the apostle Paul was clearly fond of it.³ But aside from minimal examples in Jn. 18:36; Lk. 13:24 and Jude 3, the only other substantial instance in the NT is in Hb. 12:1-3.

The close parallel of the agonistic images in 4 Maccabees with those in Hb. 12:1-3 has especially been widely acknowledged. 4 Maccabees presents Eleazar and the martyrs as contestants in a struggle unto death (ἄγωνίζομαι, ἄγών).⁴ The "Agon" spoken of in Hb. 12 also

¹Eight times in Hb. 12:4-11 the author of Hebrews uses παιδεία or παιδεύω.

²Stauffer, "ἄγών," pp. 134ff., provides numerous examples of its usage outside the NT literature.

³Cf. Ro. 15:30; 1 Cor. 9:24-27; Gal. 2:2; Eph. 6:10ff.; Phil. 1:28, 30; 2:16; Col. 1:29; 2:1f.; 4:12f.; 1 Th. 2:2; 1 Tim. 4:7ff.; 6:12; 2 Tim. 2:3ff; 4:5-7.

⁴προηγωνίζετο, ἡγωνίζετο (4 Macc. 17:13); ἄγών (4 Macc. 17:11; cf. 11:20; 13:15; 15:29; 16:16).

refers to suffering and the possibly deadly nature of the struggle. The story of the martyrs in 4 Maccabees tells of their endurance (ὑπομονή; ὑπομένειν)¹ of unjust sufferings at the instigation of evil opposition (ἀνταγωνίζομαι).² Hb. 12 emphasizes the motif of endurance³ and also mentions the activities of antagonists.⁴ The martyrs of 4 Maccabees looked forward to their crowning with honour, standing next to the throne of God.⁵ Hb. 12 also speaks of an expectation of exaltation, though the reference to Jesus' sitting at God's right hand went beyond anything conceived of by the author of 4 Maccabees vis-a-vis the Maccabean martyrs. Finally, the cosmos and all men observed as spectators this virtuous triumph of the martyrs of 4 Maccabees (ἐθεώρει).⁶ Hb. 12 too alluded to a crowd of observers, "witnesses," which--at least in part--played the role of spectators.

Given such linguistic and conceptual correspondence, it would seem likely that the martyrology of 4 Maccabees exercised at least some influence on the thinking of the author of Hebrews in 12:1-11. Yet, the wide circulation of the agonistic imagery in Greek and Hellenistic-Jewish literature prior to the writing of Hebrews makes it by no means sure that the author of Hebrews has been in any ^{way} influenced

¹The ὑπομονή / ὑπομένω terms occur frequently in 4 Maccabees, most significantly in 17:7, 10, 12, 17, 23.

²4 Macc. 17:14.

³The frequent occurrence of the ὑπομονή / ὑπομένω words in Hb. 12:1-3 and its larger context has already been noted above.

⁴ἀντιλογίαν (Hb. 12:3); ἀνταγωνιζόμενοι (Hb. 12:4).

⁵4 Macc. 17:15, 18.

⁶4 Maccabees uses the less theologically charged verb θεωρέω (17:7, 14) instead of μαρτυρέω (Hb. 12:1). In 4 Macc. 16:16 the author of 4 Maccabees describes the participants in the "Agon" themselves as "witnesses" (διαμαρτυρία τοῦ ἔθνους).

specifically by 4 Maccabees (or 2 Macc. 7-8). Nevertheless, in light of the possible allusion to the martyrs of 4 Maccabees in Hb. 11:35, 4 Maccabees (and 2 Macc. 7-8) remains a most remarkable parallel to Hb. 12:1ff.¹

Paul's use of the agonistic metaphor in his epistles reveals a consistently and emphatically paraenetic intent. For Paul, as for the author of Hebrews, the life of faith was never static. Therefore, with agonistic images Paul not only exhorts his readers to maximal exertion in Christian living, but also he calls them to steadfastness, endurance and perseverance, a warning not to quit or swerve from the course of faith once begun. Unlike the Greek "Agon" of virtue, which according to V. C. Pfitzner, stressed the development of innate powers and strength to the peak of moral self-perfection, Paul exhorts his readers to endure in faithfulness to God, to grow in faith and in the gifts of the Spirit.² Hb. 12:1-3 is especially consonant with Paul's paraenetic stress on endurance in faith. Yet, with one radical stroke, the author of Hebrews distinguishes himself significantly from Paul. The author of Hebrews sets before his readers a picture of Jesus himself in the midst of that human "Agon" of faith, an astonishing connexion which Paul never makes.³ Alone in the NT, Hebrews makes this connexion.

¹Michel, Hebräer (1975), pp. 425-436, constantly draws special attention to the many significant points of contact between Hb. 12:1-3 and 4 Maccabees in his exegesis.

²On the whole topic of Paul's use of the agonistic metaphor in his epistles, the work of V. C. Pfitzner, Agon Motif, is particularly valuable. This present study is deeply indebted to his exhaustive analysis of this Pauline peculiarity.

³This is not to say that in the Pauline literature nothing whatever like this occurs. Though it is hardly explicit, in 1 Tim. 6:12ff. the connexion to Jesus seems to be made. Having exhorted his readers to fight the good fight of faith (ἀγωνίζου τὸν καλὸν ἀγῶνα τῆς πίστεως) the author then sets forth Jesus as Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ μαρτυρήσαντος ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου τὴν καλὴν ὁμολογίαν.

In his study on ἀγών E. Stauffer¹ identifies five motifs of thought expressed through the larger "Agon" concept in primitive Christianity: (a) The goal can be reached only with maximal personal exertion; (b) Not only exertion, but rigid denial or renunciation is also required; (c) The thought of antagonists (rare in the NT according to Stauffer) is present;² (d) Suffering, which may or may not be consummated in martyrdom, is the sharpest form of the "Agon" for the Christian to undergo on earth;³ (e) The final goal for which the Christian fights, works and suffers is not limited to that individual's salvation alone, but also to the salvation of the larger Christian community. It appears that to some degree Hb. 12:1ff. touches on all five of these motifs Stauffer has identified in primitive Christian thought. Yet, Hb. 12:1-3 remains absolutely unique and distinct. The singularity of Hb. 12:1-3 lies not in its use of the characteristic terminology of the agonistic metaphor, nor even in the motifs of thought linked to that athletic imagery, but rather in the person who above all others has contended in the "Agon" of faith--Jesus Christ.

C. Gospel Tradition and Hb. 12:1-3

Attention has already been drawn to two pieces of the primitive Christian kerygma concerning Jesus' earthly life which form the historical foundation upon which the author of Hebrews has built his word of encouragement and warning: (a) Jesus' suffering on the cross and (b) his endurance of active hostility from enemies.

¹Stauffer, "ἀγών," pp. 137-139.

²Stauffer, "ἀγών," pp. 137f., considers Hb. 12:3f virtually unique in its explicit use of this particular motif.

³One must take note here of the remarkable reminiscence passage in Hb. 10:32ff.--a passage Stauffer, "ἀγών," p. 138, describes as "shot through with the thought of martyrdom."

That Jesus actually suffered and died on a σταυρός is the central element of the earliest Christian teaching and preaching about Jesus. Every stream of the gospel tradition contains as the climax of Jesus' earthly way his crucifixion. That the apostle Paul focused his missionary preaching and teaching on the cross of Jesus is a certainty.¹ That the σταυρός was a tainted method of execution, understood in the first century to be not only brutal but also associated with shame, further accurately reflects historically on the culture of Jesus' day. Indeed, the earliest Christian preaching addressed and reinterpreted for its hearers the shameful manner of death of its leader and saviour.² Hb. 12:1-3 represents an early Christian's attempt at just such a reinterpretation.

Though the reference to Jesus' experience of active hostility and opposition from his enemies stands well-attested in gospel traditions, the generalized nature of the reference in Hb. 12:3 remains problematic. The comments above concerning this matter will suffice.

V. Significance of Jesus' Earthly Life in Hb. 12:1-3

A. Christology--Unity and Uniqueness

Perhaps no passage in the NT speaks so boldly of the genuine human faith of Jesus as Hb. 12:1-3. G. Hughes rightly observes that most English translations of Hb. 12:2-- τὸν τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτὴν --reveal a subconscious unwillingness to present Jesus as a participant in faith as well as the object of faith.³ But the author of Hebrews possesses no such subconscious christological qualms. As

¹Cf. Gal. 3:1; 1 Cor. 2:2.

²See especially 1 Cor. 1:23ff.; cf. Gal. 5:11; 6:14. Note also the references to Jesus as a "stumbling stone" (σκανδαλός/σκανδαλίζομαι ; Ro. 9:32; 11:9; 1 Pt. 2:8).

³G. Hughes, Hebrews and Hermeneutics, p. 80.

pointed out above in the exegesis, the author of Hebrews clearly understands Jesus as part of the faith community of Hb. 11 and of contemporary Christians, those with whom Jesus says: ἐγὼ ἔσομαι πεποίθως ἐπ' αὐτῷ . (Hb. 2:13a).¹

The author of Hebrews authenticates Jesus' faith by underlining the living and dynamic demonstration of that faith within Jesus' own human experience. Jesus' faith, according to Hebrews, was not merely an abstract belief and confident hope in God's promises, but like the heroes of faith in Hb. 11, Jesus' faith evidenced itself through his faithful endurance as a man of hostile opposition, even a cruel death on a cross. G. Hughes' characterization of πίστις in Hb. 11 as a "believing faithfulness"² well captures the active and living nature of Jesus' faith in Hb. 12:1-3. Jesus' faith was worked out in the crucible of his earthly life as a man.

Furthermore, Jesus shared the eschatological faith perspective of mankind. The fulfillment of the promises of God remained future for Jesus. It was "for the joy set before him" that Jesus endured the cross. His eyes of faith were so focused on the future joy of God's promises being fulfilled that he determined to endure in the "Agon" of faith no matter the immediate cost. Precisely here the author of Hebrews most radically asserts the reality of Jesus' human experience of faith. Jesus knew first-hand the human tension which characterizes the "Agon" of faith, "not seeing" in the present and yet being so certain of God's promises that even death is preferable to resigning from the "Agon."

In all this ^{the} note of Jesus' unity with the faith community

¹See above in this present study on Hb. 2:13.

²G. Hughes, Hebrews and Hermeneutics, p. 79.

rings loud. As "Archegos" of faith, Jesus goes before his brethren in the "Agon" of faith. As "perfecter" of faith, Jesus has completed the "Agon" of faith and reached faith's goal. This emphasis on Jesus' faith stands out as the key to understanding Hebrews' portrayal of Jesus in this passage.

Yet it would be remiss if the uniqueness of Jesus in Hb. 12:1-3 were not also freely granted. For the author of Hebrews, the Jesus he speaks of in this passage now resides enthroned at God's right hand, the exalted Lord. Yet he links this exalted figure of Jesus inextricably to the humiliated Jesus who as a man endured the cross and deadly opposition of men. Thus, for the reader of Hebrews, the Jesus who participated in faith also stands as the object and focus of faith.

B. Paraenesis in Hb. 12:1-3

Continuing a pattern already observed elsewhere in his word of exhortation, the author of Hebrews in 12:1-3 turns his christological insights to the service of his paraenesis.¹ Indeed, the dominant paraenetic concern of the author is asserted from the outset in 12:1 with the self-inclusive challenge: καὶ ἡμεῖς . . . δι' ὑπομονῆς τρέχωμεν τὸν προκειμένον ἡμῖν ἀγῶνα . It is within this paraenetic context that the author's image of Jesus emerges.

As noted above, the pivotal perspective on Jesus presented in this passage is his genuine human involvement in the "Agon" of faith. Why such emphasis on Jesus' faith? The answer must lie in the author's uncompromisingly strong alignment of Jesus with the community of faith, especially with his present readership. With this solidarity firmly established the author then appeals to Jesus and his particular way of faith as a man as both an example and an eschatological source

¹Cf. Hb. 4:14ff. and 5:7ff.

of motivation for those presently struggling to endure in their own "Agon" of faith.

The author sets Jesus in his way of faith before his readers as a pattern to be followed. With caution, one may even perceive, however imprecisely, part of the readers of Hebrews' own life situation both implied by the particular paradigmatic view of Jesus which the author highlights and more explicitly suggested in the following context (12:4-11).

The most significant piece of the pattern is Jesus' determined endurance in his faith in God's promises, despite experiencing increasingly severe opposition and sufferings at the hands of enemies. Though not yet dying for their faith (οὐπω μέχρις αἵματος 12:4), Hebrews' readers also had clearly encountered hostile opposition from non-Christian quarters.¹ In 12:4-11 the author of Hebrews goes to great lengths to reinterpret their hardships as a divine "paideia" to be endured (εἰς παιδείαν ὑπομένετε , 12:7) as part of the "Agon" of faith. The author fleshes out the endurance motif by briefly noting that Jesus disregarded the shame (αἰσχύνῃς καταφρονήσας) of his unsurpassable humiliation of the cross. In 12:4-11 the author urges his readers to regard their own hardships and humiliation, not as a reason for desertion,² but as evidence of God's love and acceptance and part of his will--a divine "paideia" process.

The tension which Hebrews so dramatically underlines in 12:2

¹That Hebrews' readers had already suffered a degree of persecution and suffering is plain, as Hb. 10:32ff. indicates. Hb. 12:4, however, does suggest strongly that the persecution had not yet accelerated to the martyrdom stage.

²That abandonment of their Christian faith and community was a real possibility for Hebrews' readers is clear from such passages as 2:1 and 10:25-39. Hb. 12:3b also contains an implicit note of caution or warning.

between σταυρός and χαρά indicates Jesus' forward look of faith. Jesus' earthly existence was one of present suffering endured while focusing his own eyes of faith on a future joy and vindication. Hebrews' readers were now experiencing that same kind of tension of faith-existence. They also should emulate Jesus' forward looking faith and endure their presently painful experiences as that which will prove "later on" (ὕστερον , 12:11) to be beneficial.¹ That Jesus, having endured faithfully in his own "Agon" of faith, now resides exalted in God's presence augurs well for his brethren in the faith community who also endure. If they, like Jesus, persevere in their own way of faith, they will also surely reap a rich reward (10:35).²

¹Hebrews' readers had already demonstrated their ability to look forward in faith to their better and more lasting possessions (Hb. 10:34).

²Cf. Hb. 10:35f., where the author refers to the μεγάλη μισθαποδοσία sure to be obtained if they will endure (ὑπομονῆς γὰρ ἔχετε χρεῖαν , 10:36).

Chapter 7

JESUS' CRUCIFIXION "OUTSIDE THE GATE" (Hb. 13:12)

Chapter 7

JESUS' CRUCIFIXION "OUTSIDE THE GATE" (Hb. 13:12)

I. Introduction

The final reference in the Epistle to the Hebrews to Jesus' earthly life, and one of the clearest historical reminiscences about Jesus' human existence in the epistle, is contained in Hb.13:12: *Ἰησοῦς . . . ἔξω τῆς πύλης ἔπαθεν* . That this refers to the event and place of Jesus' crucifixion outside the walled boundaries of the city of Jerusalem, as indicated in the gospel tradition, seems plain. Indeed, a general consensus among interpreters of Hebrews exists at this point. Our following study will attempt to explore the author of Hebrews' particular knowledge, presentation and use of this reference to Jesus' suffering "outside the gate."

II. Contextual Considerations

That the author in Hb. 13:12 alludes to Jesus' crucifixion "outside the gate" of Jerusalem perhaps represents the sole non-controversial element in its immediate context, roughly taken as vv.9-16. Indeed, Hb. 13:9-14 has been regarded as one of the most complex and controversial passages within not only Hebrews, but the entire NT. Interpreters are of divided opinion at virtually every point.

Hb. 13:1 presents the reader with a clear change of tone from the main body of the epistle, chapters 1-12. Many aspects which are unique in this epistle are found within chapter 13. The

author does not dwell at length on a single topic or theme, but widely varies his themes and counsel throughout this last chapter of his epistle. There are within this chapter diverse teachings, commands, personal notes, news items, greetings, an elegant benediction (which does not conclude the epistle with its "Amen") and a personal plea that the author's "word of exhortation" as a whole would not go unheeded. The relation of these various elements to the body of the epistle is often less than apparent,¹ however, the section 13:9-14 evinces the clearest relationship to the argument in the body of the epistle (Hb. 1-12), delving once again into the familiar and fertile soil of the OT cultic analogy with Jesus Christ. Yet, even in 13:9-14, where one might expect to be on familiar ground, the relationship to previous material is difficult to establish with finality since so many of its cultic references seem to stand alone within Hebrews. Numerous attempts have been made to resolve the various exegetical enigmas in this passage, as the history of interpretation witnesses,² and the questions are still being asked.³ What was the nature of the "various and strange teachings" (διδάχαίς

¹The relation of the various themes taken up in Hb. 13 to the body of the epistle (Hb. 1-12) is the express purpose of Floyd Filson's concise monograph, 'Yesterday.' A Study of Hebrews in the Light of Chapter 13, Studies in Biblical Theology 4 (London, 1967). Filson's own view is that Hb. 13 was part of the original document, that Hebrews can best be explained as a literary unity, and that unifying elements are to be discovered through a careful examination of Hb. 13.

²B. Haensler, "Zur Geschichte der Exegese von Hbr 13:10," BZ 11 (1913), pp. 403-409. O. Michel, Hebräer (1975), pp. 493-522, presents a particularly extensive and excellent treatment of this problematic section of Hebrews. Cf. also Spicq, Hébreux II, pp. 426ff.; Riegenbach, Hebräer, pp. 438-446.

³Cf. Filson, 'Yesterday', especially pp. 43-70; J. M. Creed, "Hebrews xiii 10," ExpT 1 (1938-39), pp. 13-15; J. N. Thompson, "Outside the Camp: A Study of Hebrews 13:9-14," CBQ 40 (1978), pp. 53-63; D. Lührmann, "Der Hohepriester ausserhalb des Lagers (Hebr 13:12)," ZNW 69 (1978), pp. 178-186; A. Snell, "We Have an Altar,"

ποικίλαις καὶ ξέναις , 13:9) toward which the readers were attracted? What does the author mean by the "foods" (βρώμασιν , 13:9) which are set in antithesis with the "grace which strengthens the heart?" What (and where) is the "altar" (θυσιαστήριον , 13:10) that Christians have? Who are "those who serve at the tent" (οἱ τῇ σκηνῇ λατρεύοντες 13:10)? What precisely is the "tent" (σκηνή , 13:10)? How does this section 13:9-14 cohere logically, as the many logical connectives seem to indicate (γάρ , vv.9, 11, 14; διὸ καί, v. 12; τοίνυν , v.13)? What is the meaning of the distinctive phrase "outside the camp" (ἔξω τῆς παρεμβολῆς , vv.11, 12, 13)? What is the meaning of the author's exhortation in v.13 to go to Jesus "outside the camp?" These and other questions complicate any attempt to come fully to grips with the meaning of this passage. In the subsequent exegesis we will attempt to limit the discussion to those issues which most directly reflect upon the reference in 13:12 to Jesus' suffering "outside the gate."

Without question, the contextual setting for Hb. 13:12 is the christological analogy which the author draws with various aspects and elements of the OT cultus. The references to the "altar" (θυσιαστήριον), the wilderness "tent" (σκηνή), the Day of Atonement sacrifice for sins offered by the high priest in the "most holy place" (τὰ ἅγια) and the reference to the sacrificial exception to the rule in Lev. 16:27 prohibiting the eating of the offerings on the Day of Atonement and ordering their holocaust on unsacred ground outside the Israelite wilderness camp ground, testify more than adequately to this fact.

RefTheolRev 23 (1964), pp. 16-23; C. F. D. Moule, "Sanctuary and Sacrifice in the Church of the New Testament," JTS 1 (1950), pp. 36ff.; R. Williamson, "The Eucharist and the Epistle to the Hebrews," NTS 21 (1975), pp. 300-312; E. Grässer, "Historische Jesus," pp. 82ff.; O. Holtzmann, "Der Hebräerbrief und das Abendmahl," ZNW 10 (1909), pp. 251-260; H. Koester, "'Outside the Camp': Hebrews 13:9-14," HTR 55 (1962), pp. 299-315; also the commentaries ad loc.

III. Exegetical Analysis of Hb. 13:12

The opening logical connective $\delta\iota\delta\kappa\alpha\iota$ in 13:12 immediately places this verse in the context of the preceding comment in v.11. Hb. 13:11 is a clear reference back to the levitical regulation in Lev. 16:27 concerning the sacrifice for sins offered on the Day of Atonement. Unlike other sacrificial offerings which were normally consumed by the priests, the bodies of the animals sacrificed in the Holy of holies ($\tau\alpha\ \acute{\alpha}\gamma\iota\alpha$) on the Day of Atonement were not to be eaten, but taken "outside the camp" ($\acute{\epsilon}\xi\omega\ \tau\eta\varsigma\ \pi\alpha\rho\epsilon\mu\beta\omicron\lambda\eta\varsigma$) and incinerated. But, as H. Koester so strongly emphasized,¹ to apprehend the full significance of the author of Hebrews' reference to Lev. 16:27 for his following argumentation in Hb. 13:12-13 one must take full account of the following verse in Lev. 16:28: $\acute{o}\ \delta\grave{\epsilon}\ \kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\kappa\alpha\acute{\iota}\omega\nu\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\grave{\alpha},\ \pi\lambda\upsilon\nu\epsilon\acute{\iota}\ \tau\grave{\alpha}\ \acute{\iota}\mu\acute{\alpha}\tau\iota\alpha,\ \kappa\alpha\acute{\iota}\ \lambda\omicron\upsilon\sigma\epsilon\tau\alpha\iota\ \tau\acute{o}\ \sigma\acute{\omega}\mu\alpha\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\ \acute{\upsilon}\delta\alpha\tau\iota,\ \kappa\alpha\acute{\iota}\ \mu\epsilon\tau\grave{\alpha}\ \tau\alpha\upsilon\tau\alpha\ \epsilon\acute{\iota}\sigma\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\sigma\epsilon\tau\alpha\iota\ \epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma\ \tau\eta\nu\ \pi\alpha\rho\epsilon\mu\beta\omicron\lambda\eta\nu$. The wilderness "camp" of the Israelites was "holy," and to be "outside the camp" was to be defiled and unclean, requiring ritual ablutions in order to re-enter the holy community of the "camp" (also Lev. 16:26). Precisely here one confronts the striking contrast and profound paradox of Jesus' sanctifying sacrifice made "outside the camp"--by Jewish definition then an "unholy sacrifice"²--with that of the OT cultic sacrifices offered within the holy camp. This ancient levitical regulation thus forms the key contextual background for the author's reference to Jesus in 13:12. Whatever might have been the contemporary application made by the readers of this epistle in their situation, this passage first of all is a

¹Koester, "Outside the Camp," pp. 299f.; cf. F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 403, who also notes the possibly significant parallel in sense with Ex. 33:7 and Moses' removal of the "tent of testimony" to a place "outside the camp" in the aftermath of the Golden Calf incident.

²Koester, "Outside the Camp," p. 315, coins this striking phrase.

biblical comparison, a typological comparison of the OT sin offerings with the sin offering and sacrifice of Jesus on Golgotha. We shall return to the author's typological interpretation of this passage after a few brief observations on Hb. 13:12 itself.

The author introduces Jesus into his argument without giving him any christological ascription, simply the human name Ἰησοῦς. On this Michel simply comments: "Name ohne Zusatz häufig im Hebr zur Betonung seiner Geschichtlichkeit."¹ The firm reference in 13:12 to Jesus' crucifixion outside Jerusalem's city gate underlines the validity of this observation.

Once again in this epistle the author refers to Jesus' "suffering" (ἐπαθεν). Here the author firmly underlines the reality of Jesus' humanity using a word, ἐπαθεν, used only in Hebrews for the suffering of Jesus.² That Jesus suffered "in the days of his flesh" (Hb. 5:7) firmly anchored Jesus within the realm of human existence.

In Hb. 13:12 the author of Hebrews identifies the location of Jesus' "suffering" as "outside the gate" (ἐξω τῆς πόλεως). This comment contains an implicit, yet clear, historical reference to Jesus' crucifixion on Golgotha's hill outside the city wall of Jerusalem. In the gospels one also discovers that as a condemned criminal Jesus, according to both oriental and Roman customs, would have been executed outside the city walls--"near the city", but not within it.³ Grässer argues

¹Michel, Hebräer (1975), p. 507; cf. Westcott's excursus on "the Divine Names in Hebrews," Hebrews, pp. 33-35; also Spicq, Hébreux I, pp. 287-301; Filson, 'Yesterday', p. 37.

²Hb. 2:18; 5:8; 9:26; cf. 2:9,10. In Hb. 13:12 ἐπαθεν specifically points to Jesus' death, to his passion. The use of πάσχω elsewhere in Hebrews is not always so clearly limited in its scope, e. g., 2:18; 5:8. See above the discussion of these passages.

³ἐγγὺς ἦν ὁ τόπος τῆς πόλεως, Jn. 19:20; cf. "went out", ἐξῆλθεν, Jn. 19:17, Mk. 15:20, Mtt. 27:32 and ἐξερχόμεθα in Hb. 13:13.

that the unique and unusual expression "outside the gate" implies the author's dependence on an oral Jesus-tradition rather than the synoptic tradition or John for his knowledge of this event.¹ This may be possible, though it is ultimately impossible to prove. It is, however, unlikely that the author of Hebrews himself manufactured this historical detail out of his typological interpretation of the levitical ruling in Lev. 16. The reverse appears more probable, although the uniqueness of the expression "outside the gate" within the NT--an expression which the author of Hebrews may well have originated himself with reference to Jesus' death on Golgotha--suggests that he has reflected on that particular detail of Jesus' life in light of the analogous expression in Lev. 16:27. There can be little doubt that in Hb. 13:12 the author has referred back to a well known gospel tradition about the place of Jesus' death. Whatever else this reference to Jesus in Hb. 13:12 may represent for the author by way of interpretation and application in the life situation of his readers, the words in 13:12 must first be understood as a reference to the historical fact of Jesus' death outside the city of Jerusalem.

IV. Significance of Jesus' Death Outside the Gate

It is a far more thorny question to ask precisely how then the author of Hebrews has interpreted and used this historical fact from

Jeremias, "πύλη, πύλῳν," TDNT VI, ed G. Friedrich, trans. G. Bromiley (1968), pp. 921-928 (especially pp. 921f.), also notes the interesting parallel in the parable of the "wicked tenants" who throw the "son" out of the vineyard and kill him, Mtt. 21:39, Lk. 20:15. Jeremias considers the apparent reversal of the order in the Marcan account of this parable (Mk. 12:8, they kill the son and then throw him out) as the earlier version, and that Mtt and Lk represent a later alteration made for christological purposes. Cf. Grässer, "Historischer Jesus," pp. 82f.

¹Grässer, "Historischer Jesus," pp. 82f.

Jesus' life for his readers in his argument. Yet the question of the function of this historical reminiscence in 13:12 must be addressed. The author's interpretation is twofold.

A. Christological-Soteriological

There can be little doubt that the author of Hebrews' reference to Jesus' crucifixion outside the gate is closely related to his soteriological concerns, as the ἵνα-clause in 13:12 clearly indicates: ἵνα ἁγιασθῇ διὰ τοῦ ἰδίου αἵματος τὸν λαόν.¹ Jesus' death on Golgotha was regarded through the author's typological interpretation as analogous to the sacrifice for sins offered by the OT high priest on the great Day of Atonement. His reference in 13:11 back to Lev. 16:27 further reveals the clear correspondence in the author's mind between the OT sacrifices burned ἔξω τῆς παρεμβολῆς and Jesus' death ἔξω τῆς πόλεως.² If the sacrificial analogy is imperfect,³ it represents a conscious imperfection by which the author of Hebrews highlights an antithetical relationship between the two. This contrast is brought most significantly into focus when seen in the light of the basic OT sense of the phrase "outside the camp" in Lev. 16. As noted above, the Israelite camp in the wilderness was considered "holy" ground, while ground "outside the camp" was considered "unholy." The immediate context of Lev. 16:26-28 makes this eminently plain. The OT Day of Atonement sacrifices were offered within the camp, then burned outside the camp. The person in charge of the incineration outside the camp was automatically considered unclean, a defiled condition which necessitated ritual ablutions prior

¹Cf. Hb. 2:17.

²The change in terminology to πόλη reflects more accurately on the city context, a suggestion to which the author returns in 13:14.

³One glaring and important analogical inconsistency is obviously the location of the actual sacrifice, although there is further--though

to his re-entering the holy camp ground (Lev. 16:26,28). For the author of Hebrews, Jesus' crucifixion "outside the gate," corresponding to "outside the camp," must represent an absolutely critical element in his interpretation. In direct antithesis with the OT Day of Atonement scenario, the great high priest Jesus himself dies as a sacrifice for sins "outside the gate" in order to sanctify the people from their sins, a sacrifice to make men holy offered poignantly and paradoxically on "unholy ground." The contrast here of Jesus' sacrifice and high priesthood with that of the OT cultus, in much the same way as Jesus' descent from Judah rather than Levi (Hb. 7:14) was a stunning contrast, focused the readers of Hebrews' attention on the radical distinction of the Christian faith from Judaism. Furthermore, such a contrast would have strongly implied the inadequacy and obsolescence of the religion of the Jewish "camp." To remain within the "camp" would mean, ultimately, a denial of the Christian confession whose redemptive sacrifice is offered "outside the camp." Having suggested that the author of Hebrews may have had the episode recounted in Ex. 33:7 on his mind, F. F. Bruce sees Hebrews' meaning as that the Lord must now, as he was then, be sought and found "outside the camp."

Now in the person of Jesus, God had again been rejected in the camp; His presence was therefore to be enjoyed outside the camp, where Jesus was, and everyone who sought Him must go out and approach Him through Jesus. . . . Were they to leave its sacred precincts and venture on to unhallowed ground? Yes, because in Jesus the old values had been reversed. What was formerly sacred was now unhallowed, because Jesus had been expelled from it; ¹what was formerly unhallowed was now sacred, because Jesus was there.

less important--inconsistency in the fact that the OT sacrifice was burned. Also unlike the OT analogy, the readers of Hebrews are exhorted in 13:13 to remain outside the camp. Cf. Michel, Hebräer (1975), pp. 507ff.

¹F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 403.

B. Paraenetic

But the author of Hebrews does not only use the reference to Jesus' earthly life in 13:12 as a historical support for his christological and soteriological argument. The author then proceeds explicitly to employ this reference to Jesus in his paraenesis, in a self-inclusive challenge: τοινῦν ἐξερχώμεθα πρὸς αὐτὸν ἔξω τῆς παρεμβολῆς (v.13).¹ The author expressly fixes upon the phrase "outside the camp" from vv.11,12.

How did the author of Hebrews intend his readers to understand his exhortation to them to go to Jesus "outside the camp?" It will remain ultimately unknowable precisely what the author meant in 13:13 by the phrase "outside the camp," though we may briefly outline below the high points of certain lines of interpretation which have been followed.

But at the outset, it seems vitally important to note that the participial clause τὸν ὀνειδισμόν αὐτοῦ φέροντες (v.13b) provides some key contextual ground for understanding the likely meaning of "outside the camp" for the author in this passage. Christ's people's approach to him "outside the camp" is specifically characterized by their sharing of the same sort of "disgrace" (ὀνειδισμός) he endured on the cross "outside the gate." Like Christ, his people should disregard such shame endured for the sake of Christ (Hb. 12:2).² Their

¹The grammatical form of Hb. 13:9-14 is notably similar to that of other paraenetic sections of Hebrews. The imperative μὴ παραφέρεσθε is supported by two affirmations in the indicative (ἔχομεν θυσιαστήριον, v.10; Ἰησοῦς . . . ἔξω τῆς πόλεως ἔπαθεν, v.12). The cohortative subjunctive, ἐξερχώμεθα πρὸς αὐτόν, v.13, is again supported by an affirmation in the indicative (ἔχομεν, v.14). This interweaving of the imperative, cohortative subjunctive and indicative moods is characteristic of Hebrews' paraenetic portions, e. g., 4:14f., 12:1-3.

²There is a parallel in thought here between the reference to the ὀνειδισμός of Christ (13:13) and the αἰσχύνη (12:2) Jesus experienced on the σταυρός. Both reflect on the ignominious manner of

sharing of sufferings like his should not only be expected, but understood as virtual evidence of their divine sonship and brotherhood with Christ (Hb. 12:4-11). Most significantly though, the reference to "disgrace" in the immediate context strongly suggests a primary connexion for ἔξω τῆς παρεμβολῆς to the decidedly human and earthly humiliation and suffering of Christ ἔξω τῆς πόλεως . Any adequate interpretation of "outside the camp" in Hb. 13:13 must fully reckon with this strongly human and earthly context suggested in the term ὀνειδισμός.

Typical of one line of interpretation is J. N. Thompson, who suggests that the author of Hebrews, like Philo, interprets "outside the camp" to mean "outside the earthly sphere. For Hebrews, Christ's offering was in the heavenly sanctuary."¹ The "altar" of Hb. 13:10 is for Thompson the heavenly sanctuary as well. Thompson considers such fleshly-heavenly dualism characteristic of the Epistle to the Hebrews throughout, and especially in 13:9-14.

To "go out" is to give up earthly securities (11:8) and to accept the lifestyle of the pilgrim people. . . . To live "outside" may involve bearing the "shame" . . . of Christ, just as the pilgrim people in the past endured shame for his sake (11:26). There is a sense, therefore, in which the pilgrim existence involves the renunciation of all securities in the earthly sphere.²

Such a line of interpretation suffers from an insufficient valuing of the OT context from which the author of Hebrews has drawn the expression "outside the camp." Lev. 16:26-28 relates the phrase "outside the camp" most straightforwardly to the literal camp ground of the Israelites, or figuratively to the Israelite "community." The author of Hebrews clearly picked up on the basic geographical sense of the phrase in 13:12,

Jesus' death on a cross, and both occur in paraenetic passages which encourage Christian readers who presently share in a similar experience of shame and insult or disgrace.

¹Thompson, "Outside the Camp," p.61.

²Ibid.

and very likely also understood its figurative 'Jewish community' sense as well.¹ Thompson, however, seems to ignore this basic sense of the OT passage to which the author of Hebrews makes specific reference. It is by no means clear that the author of Hebrews has in a dualistic fashion allegorized "outside the camp" in Hb. 13 as Philo has done in his interpretation of Ex. 33:7 where the same expression is found.² The author of Hebrews' linking of "outside the camp" with Jesus' experience of suffering on the cross occurred in a decidedly earthly place and not in "the darkness, the invisible region" wherein lie secret mysteries.³ It is difficult to conceive of such a mystical and unworldly meaning for "outside the camp" in Hb. 13:11-13, especially in light of the solid historical and earthly content the author associates with this phrase in 13:12 through the use of the words "gate" and "suffered." Further, Thompson seems unclear as to how going to Christ "in the heavenly sanctuary" would involve any real sense of "disgrace" (ὄνειδισμός), an experience which possesses a concrete connexion to the realm of human existence, the realm of Jesus' suffering of death on a cross.

Another line of interpretation is presented by H. Koester⁴ who emphasizes the OT context which stresses the aspect of holy and unholy in regard to the phrase "outside the camp." For Koester "outside the

¹F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 403, suggests that the word "camp" is figuratively equivalent to the "established fellowship and ordinances of Judaism." This is well in line with the clear meaning in the OT passages in question here.

²See Leg. All. 2.54f.; 3.46; Quod det. 160; De gig. 54 οὕτως καὶ Μωυσῆς ἔξω τῆς παρεμβολῆς καὶ τοῦ σωματικοῦ παντός στρατοπέδου πῆξας τὴν ἑαυτοῦ σκηνήν; cf. De ebr. 25 ("in the camp"="in the body"). Moffatt, Hebrews, p. 236, regards this Philonic sense as consonant with Hb. 13:11ff.

³De gig. 52-61, from the Loeb translation.

⁴Koester, "Outside the Camp," pp. 299ff.

camp" is pre-eminently the earthly or "worldly" place, the place of "uncleanness"--the place of Christ's cross. He therefore draws a contrast in Hebrews between the "sacred" and the "profane" in what he terms an "anticultic antithesis."¹ No longer should Christ's people rely on any sacred cultic performances, since Christ's once-for-all sacrifice on the cross renders all other sacrifices or cultic observances obsolete.

The sacrifice 'outside the camp' puts an end to all cultic and sacred performances, and those who have this 'altar' are not to dwell in sacred places and to deal with ritual₂ regulations, but to go out into the world to bear his reproach.²

Koester's conception of an anticultic polemic in Hb. 13:9ff. leads him to postulate that the danger posed to Hebrews' readers was a (heretical) tendency within the Christian community toward cultic or sacrificial practices which would have purportedly put the participant into direct communion with God. To this, Koester contends, Hb. 13:9ff. is an emphatic 'no!'. Koester rejects the more traditional interpretation of Hebrews as a stern warning and exhortation not to revert to Judaism.³ He prefers to postulate the presence of certain undefined inner-Christian heresies (which, he admits, may well have had their roots in Judaism) that accented cultic observances and a separation from this earthly

¹Ibid., p. 303.

²Ibid., p. 313. Koester rightly associates "altar" with "outside the camp." He plainly identifies "altar" in Hb. 13:9ff. as Calvary, an identification which Moule, "Sanctuary and Sacrifice," also makes. Moule further argues that the form ἔχουεν θυσιαστήριον implies (as in Hb. 4:15) a response to a false charge that Christians have no real religion, e. g., no altar, no sacrifice, etc. (p. 38).

³Koester, "Outside the Camp," pp. 301f., prefers to see the point not as between true and false religion--which he says is reflected in the traditional interpretation of a reversion to Judaism danger--but between a ritualistic religion, unworldly and out of touch, and a "worldly" religion, where authentic faith is exercised in the midst of a defiled and rejecting world; in short, between the "sacred and profane."

world.

Hebrews 13.9ff. . . . is directed against any mediation of the Divine that entailed a denial of the humanity and real suffering of the redeemer in this world, which did not take this life and world seriously, but takes refuge in the sacred rather than in the human appearance of God in the world.¹

Whether or not Koester has correctly estimated the situation of Hebrews' readership, he has put his finger on the crucial issue for any adequate understanding of the exhortation in Hb. 13:13 to go to Jesus "outside the camp:" the definite earthly and human character of Jesus' suffering and death "outside the gate" in Hb. 13:12. To go to Jesus "outside the camp" meant above all a participation within that same unsacred realm of human existence where a "reproach" such as Christ himself experienced in his own earthly lifetime as a man could in some sense likewise be borne.

The more traditional line of interpretation for the paraenesis in Hb. 13:13 is that the word "camp" corresponds to the Jewish religious community, its most natural meaning in the context of Lev. 16:26-28. The author of Hebrews' exhortation to go out to Jesus beyond this "camp" is therefore a plea to predominantly Jewish Christian readers to abandon once and for all their Jewish heritage, to establish a distinct worship and life as Christians separate from Judaism.² In the early church, and

¹Ibid., p. 315. Earlier in his discussion, Koester admits being unable to identify more precisely the nature of these cultic or sacramentalist observances (pp. 304f.).

²Filson, 'Yesterday', pp. 62f., rightly argues that Hb. 13:13 could hardly have been addressed to Gentile Christians, calling them to forsake their pagan ways. "It is not simply that the sentences in 13:11-15 have woven into them deliberate references to Septuagint language which call to mind the worship of the wilderness generations of Israel. It is even more the fact that the entire argument of Hebrews moves in the framework of the Levitical pattern of worship, especially the worship of the Day of Atonement. It continually contrasts that Israelite worship with the worship of God through Christ. None of the exhortations in this or the early chapters points to any pagan ways of worship and life from which the Christians addressed should 'go forth'." Filson's own position approximates the traditional one outlined above.

it may well have been the case with the Jewish Christian readers of Hebrews, many Christians maintained some ties with their former religion, as evidenced in the early chapters of the Acts. In a time of hardship and suffering for their Christian faith, their more familiar and established Jewish heritage could have appeared attractive. Such ties were now to be viewed as a compromise of their faith in Jesus--whose priestly ministry, the author of Hebrews repeatedly argues, revealed the inadequacy and ineffectiveness of the OT cultus and rendered it obsolete by fulfilling it perfectly in himself--and therefore they needed to be rejected. Their future lay not with the "camp" of Judaism, but now "outside", where segments of the church already existed. There, beyond the safer and more familiar confines of Judaism, the Christian community must stand with their Lord "outside the camp" and share similarly of such suffering and reproach as he himself bore in rejection "outside the gate." To go out in this way to Christ would likely bring with it further opposition, such as Christ endured (12:3), and additional suffering for their Christian confession--hence the urgent need for the author of Hebrews to encourage his weakening readers.

In 13:14 the author of Hebrews continues his paraenesis, focusing his readers' eyes now upon "the city that is to come." They must not regard their present problematic situation in isolation from the great eschatological expectation of the future heavenly city. No refuge exists for Christians here and now, and as pilgrims they must endure their present sufferings and trials with their eyes fixed upon the future city of God.¹ One senses the close parallel in thought especially with Hb. 12:1-3. There, the future assurance of a "joy" set before them

¹In Hb. 11:9ff. the pilgrim stance of the people of God is clearly depicted, and in these words in 13:14 it is touched on once again.

(12:2f.) corresponds to the "city which is to come." It gives them the hope, fortitude and encouragement necessary to endure their present difficulties. As in 12:2f., the pathway to the heavenly city in 13:12ff. leads first through suffering, shame and reproach--precisely as was the case with the leader and perfecter of faith, Jesus.¹ To go to Jesus "outside the camp" now meant for Hebrews' readers their faithful endurance of real earthly sufferings and humiliations like Christ's own--bearing the reproach he bore (13:13). To "go out" to Jesus beyond the camp was not yet to be in the heavenly city, nevertheless, that pilgrim existence "outside the camp," if faithfully endured, carried within itself the assurance of a glorious future transformation to an existence "within the city" of God²--where Jesus himself now resides as the object and source of hope. "Das 'Hinausgehen zu Jesus' ist die proleptische Realisierung eschatologischer Hoffnung auf das Verheissungsziel, das Jesus bereits besitzt."³

V. Summary

In summary it must first be said that the author of Hebrews possessed the historical knowledge of the site of Jesus' crucifixion. While the peculiar expression, ἔξω τῆς πύλης, may well have emerged from

¹Koester, "Outside the Camp," pp. 314f., comments: "It is within this realm of human existence that Jesus suffered and died It is in this same realm of reality that the Christians as the true wandering people of God have no escape into performances and 'sacraments' which are in themselves 'religious' or divine. But they have to accept the challenges and sufferings of this human existence as their path to the city they are to inherit, which is however, still in the future."

²F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, p. 404, writes: "At present, the heavenly city was yet to come; but by faith those who went forth to Christ were already enrolled in its register of burgesses."

³Müller, XPICTOΣ APXHΓOΣ, p. 312.

his contemplation of the OT text Lev. 16:27, the reference in Hb. 13:12 yet reveals the author's certain awareness of this outward historical and geographical fact concerning the location of Jesus' death. It is impossible to identify the exact source of Hebrews' knowledge of this fact, though the location of Jesus' crucifixion was a common element in the early Christian traditions about Jesus and almost certainly came to the author of Hebrews in that general manner.

But the author of Hebrews' interest is not in a simple historical notation. His concern is never merely biographical. Rather, through a typological interpretation of Jesus' suffering "outside the gate," utilizing Lev. 16:27 as background, the author has brought this piece of historical information to bear upon his present Christian readers' situation. Though christological and soteriological insights obviously occupy the mind of the author in Hb. 13:9-14, it is typical of the author of Hebrews that they form the foundation for his overriding paraenetic intention, a pastoral concern to encourage his readers to faithfulness in their Christian confession despite the suffering and hardships which accompany such confession.

Passages such as this in Hb. 13:12ff. clearly indicate the author of Hebrews' deep concern with the story of Jesus' earthly life, especially his suffering and death. Such interest has been notable throughout Hebrews (2:9-18; 4:14f.; 5:7-10). In each case, consistently Hebrews' dominant paraenetic intent surfaces. When Hebrews' readers experienced persecution and suffered as a consequence of their Christian confession, their interest in Jesus' earthly way came to the fore. Jesus' earthly suffering and crucifixion showed by anticipation and perspective how the church would walk as pilgrims in their own earthly existence. As a pattern for his people, Jesus leads the way through human sufferings on to the heavenly city which abides forever (Hb. 13:14). His people must

accept the challenges and sufferings of their present human situation as their path to the city which is yet to come. Therefore, as redeemer and pattern for faith, as saviour and brother, as priest-sacrifice and model, Jesus' human existence and suffering on the cross are the foundation of the Christian faith.

Chapter 8

SUMMARY: JESUS IN HEBREWS

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I Introduction

In this concluding section we will briefly summarize the results of our exegetical investigation. What have we observed with regard to the author of Hebrews' knowledge and presentation of Jesus' earthly life?

II. The Earthly Life of Jesus in Hebrews

Nowhere in the epistolary literature of the NT is Jesus' earthly life and death portrayed with such bold realism as in Hebrews. Though his interest is clearly not biographical--the author never suggests his role as a chronicler of Jesus' earthly life--the author of Hebrews evinces a definite interest in the kind of life and death Jesus lived and died which is unparalleled anywhere in the NT outside the gospels and Acts. His concern with and knowledge of Jesus' life clearly exceeds the level of a cursory nod given to the bare "Dass" of Jesus' human existence and death.¹ Indeed, the author of Hebrews reveals a deep interest in the particular manner of the life Jesus lived as a man--the "how" and not just the "Dass"--and not only the death he died. The evidence for this concern has been forthcoming throughout the preceding exegetical examination. Therefore, we shall at this point only briefly make reference to the noteworthy aspects of the author of Hebrews' interest in Jesus' earthly way.

¹E. Grässer, "Historische Jesus," p. 89, maintains that the author of Hebrews evinces little real historical interest in Jesus, just a concern with the historical fact that Jesus really existed as a man and died on a cross. Grässer bases his judgment on the fact that the

From the outset the author of Hebrews asserts in the most concrete manner the authenticity of Jesus' humanity. The Jesus of the author's vision, who for a time occupied the same niche as mankind in the hierarchy of creation (βραχύ τι παρ' ἀγγέλους ἡλαττωμένον, 2:9), shared the same "flesh and blood" human mortal existence as his human "brothers" with whom he is one (ἐξ ἑνὸς πάντες, 2:11). He who prayed to God "in the days of his flesh" (ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ, 5:7) was "in every way made like his brothers" (κατὰ πάντα τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς ὁμοιωθῆναι, 2:17). Such descriptions as these exclude any docetic notions about Jesus' genuine humanity and underline the uncompromising realism with which the author of Hebrews regards Jesus throughout the entire epistle.

But the author of Hebrews further affirms the full participation of Jesus within the human realm of existence through his emphatic assertion that Jesus experienced temptations κατὰ πάντα καθ' ὁμοιότητα (4:15; 2:18; 5:7f.), an assertion unmatched in its scope anywhere in the NT. The author of Hebrews closely relates Jesus' susceptibility to temptation to his experience of human "weaknesses" (ἀσθενεῖν), "weaknesses" which were the channels of temptations for Jesus as they were also for men.

To broach the subject of Jesus' temptations, however, also necessarily raised the issue of his response. Accordingly, the author of Hebrews affirms Jesus as sinlessly responding in obedience to God's

references in Hebrews to Jesus' earthly life always occur in passages oriented toward soteriology or paraenesis. This, he assumes, negates their historical validity. While this present exegetical study has not delved into the larger hermeneutical question of the relationship between faith and history, it seems to this writer that such an assumption does not necessarily follow--unless it can be demonstrated that the references to Jesus' humanity in Hebrews have been manufactured from a high priestly christology. Our exegesis, however, suggests the greater likelihood that the outward facts (πρόδηλον γάρ, 7:14; 5:7; 13:12) and general earthly manner of life of Jesus (4:15; 5:7-8; 10:5-8; 12:2-3) in Hebrews came to him through Christian traditions passed down to him via those who heard the Lord himself (ὑπὸ τῶν ἀκουσάντων εἰς ἡμᾶς ἐβεβαιώθη, 2:3).

will (χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας, 4:15; ἔμαθεν . . . τὴν ὑπακοήν, 5:8). Indeed, this whole scenario of weaknesses, temptations and obedience emphatically sets forth Jesus' involvement at the most basic level of mankind's troubled existence--the genuine human struggle with fidelity to God's will. In short, Jesus too actually struggled in genuine human freedom with the decision whether or not to obey God and His will.

The author of Hebrews further connects the fact that Jesus suffered with his experience of temptation (πέπονθεν αὐτὸς πειρασθεῖς, 2:18) and his response of obedience to God (5:8). While the author of Hebrews suggests a suffering in Jesus' earthly life which encompassed more than just his passion (2:10; 2:18; 5:8), he has particularly linked Jesus' suffering with his passion and death (2:9f., 14; 5:7f.; 13:12). Late in the epistle, the author reveals his knowledge about Jesus' crucifixion (σταυρός, 12:2) "outside the gate" (13:12) of Jerusalem .

The anguished prayer which Jesus offered to God, who could save him from death, "with strong crying and tears" (μετὰ κραυγῆς ἰσχυρᾶς καὶ δακρύων , 5:7) further reveals the author of Hebrews' clear perception of the full reality of Jesus' humanity. He relates a Jesus humbly submitted to God in prayer as a needy and dependent suppliant, genuinely distraught at the prospect of death.

A truly remarkable feature of Hebrews' portrayal of Jesus is the emphasis on Jesus' own attitude of faith in God (12:1-3; 2:13). That Jesus too, like the faith witnesses in Hb. 11, needed to persevere in faithfulness to God in the face of hardship, suffering and opposition (12:1-3) clearly aligned Jesus with his human brothers in the faith community. As one with them, Jesus confesses: ἐγὼ ἔσομαι πεποιθὼς ἐπ' αὐτῷ (2:13). The author of Hebrews' special accent on Jesus as a participant in faith is unparalleled in the NT.

Lastly, the author of Hebrews refers to a well known piece of information about Jesus' family history in 7:14, his descent from the tribe of Judah (πρόδηλον γὰρ ὅτι ἐξ'Ιουδα ἀνατέταλκεν ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν).

Such references and allusions as those we have recalled above reveal that the author of Hebrews had no mere passing interest in Jesus' earthly life, but a vital and ongoing concern with the particular kind of life that Jesus experienced as a man. The fact that Jesus lived and died in its bare factuality seems to have been insufficient for the author of Hebrews' and his readers' confession of faith in Christ. Rather, the author of Hebrews openly exposed the "how" of Jesus' humanity, making it an integral part of his christological formulations and paraenesis. To this question of use we shall return below.

III. Sources of Hebrews' Knowledge of Jesus' Earthly Life

Any attempt to identify the possible source or sources which lay behind the references to the earthly Jesus in Hebrews--likely mediated to him and his readers by "those who heard" (2:3) the Lord himself--runs immediately into difficulty.

The greatest difficulty in identifying possible sources of Hebrews' knowledge is posed by the generalized nature of the references to Jesus' earthly life in Hebrews. To be sure, Jesus proclaimed the message of salvation to his disciples, as Hb. 2:3 witnesses, yet no words of Jesus found in any of the gospels are quoted or alluded to in Hebrews. The references to Jesus' suffering in 2:10,18, and even to some lesser degree Hb. 5:8, are never precisely identified. That Jesus experienced temptations was certain, yet the author of Hebrews never specifies any particular event of temptation (2:18; 4:15; the possible exception is Hb. 5:7-8 if regarded as an allusion to Gethsemane). The

opposition which Jesus encountered at the hands of evil men (12:3) is never linked to a particular occasion (although the reference to the cross in 12:2 suggest the passion week hostilities he experienced). Clearly, such general references as these resist any attempts to trace their ultimate origins.

Even where there is a clearer reference to a specific detail of history, or a specific episode in Jesus' earthly life, it has proven impossible to make a link to any one stream of tradition about Jesus. That Jesus descended from Judah (7:14) was a well attested (πρόδηλον γάρ) tradition at virtually every level of the early Christian teaching and preaching. That Jesus died on a σταυρός beyond the city walls of Jerusalem (12:2; 13:12) was also apparently common knowledge about Jesus' death found at a number of levels of gospel tradition. And even if one regards Hb. 5:7f. as a reference to Jesus in Gethsemane, as seems entirely probable to us, its summarizing character in Hebrews makes it impossible to connect to any specific tradition of the Gethsemane pericope. Although we have mentioned the possibility that Hebrews reflects the use of an independent tradition concerning Jesus' earthly life, no hard evidence exists to support such a speculation.

Since Hebrews' interpretation of Jesus represents such a unique perspective in the NT, it is perhaps not so unusual that the author's use and expression of the traditions about Jesus are equally distinct. Yet, there is often enough consonance in Hebrews with the gospel accounts to indicate the author of Hebrews' dependence on a Jesus-tradition not inconsistent with that of the gospel traditions present in the NT. The author of Hebrews accentuated and perhaps even radicalized certain aspects of his knowledge of Jesus' earthly life, for instance his reference to Jesus' temptations "in every way" like man's, yet the fact that Jesus did undergo temptation was clearly visible in the gospel

traditions and in no way contradicted them. Nevertheless, the references to Jesus' earthly way resist the attempt to isolate precise sources. The identity of "those who heard"--perhaps to be identified with their former "leaders" (13:7)--the Lord himself and brought the Christian faith to Hebrews' author and readers, likely passing on certain traditions about Jesus' earthly life, will yet remain a mystery.

IV. The Significance of Jesus' Earthly Life in Hebrews: A Poignant Paradox in Christology and Paraenesis

As has already been noted above, the author of Hebrews demonstrates no biographical aspirations vis-a-vis Jesus' earthly life and career. Rather, the pastorally concerned theologian who composed this epistle integrates his references to Jesus' earthly life into particular aspects of his christology and paraenesis, within which they function as an integral part. His references to Jesus' earthly life, whether in outward detail or inward experience of life, are never relegated to secondary or illustrative status, material which could be dispensed with without disastrous consequences to his argument. Neither do these references reflect a casual or incidental rehearsal of the lines of some catechetical formulation. On the contrary, the references to Jesus' earthly life in Hebrews consistently reveal the author's thoughtful contemplation and application of the significance of Jesus' earthly life to the faith and life of the church. Indeed, where these references occur, they almost always contain the key to the author's christological or paraenetic intentions.

The most distinctive phenomenon in the author of Hebrews' interpretation of the significance of Jesus' earthly life, observable in both christological and paraenetic perspectives, is the duality in the relationship between Jesus and his human brothers. The author of

Hebrews presents a Jesus who is in the fullest sense united with mankind, and yet at the same time decidedly distinct from them. The tension in this duality of continuity and discontinuity presents the interpreter of Hebrews with a poignant paradox characterizing the author of Hebrews' perspective on Jesus "in the days of his flesh" (5:7).

A. Duality in Christology

1. Part of the Faith Community (Unity)

The brotherhood of Jesus with men is the fundamental theme of Hb. 2:5-18 as Hebrews' author presents Jesus as the ἀρχηγός of his people's salvation. As ἀρχηγός, Jesus the Son shares with the "many sons" (πολλοὺς υἱοὺς, 2:10), his "brothers" (ἀδελφοί, 2:11,12), a common sphere of existence as a mortal human (βραχύ τι παρ' ἀγγέλους ἡλαττωμένον, 2:9; αἷμα καὶ σὰρξ, 2:14), a common goal of "glory" (δόξα, 2:9,10) and a common experience of suffering and death along the pathway there. With adroit scriptural exegesis of the OT, the author of Hebrews envisions Jesus for his readers as the "leader" of a family or community (ἐξ ἐνὸς πάντες, 2:11), calling them "brothers" (2:11,12), leading them in divine worship (2:12) and standing alongside them as faithful witnesses to their God (2:13). Further, Hebrews' author reckons it wholly appropriate for God to use Jesus' earthly sufferings and death as the means (δι᾽, 2:10) through which Jesus would be "perfected" or qualified as the leader who could bring the family of faith to their objective of glory, thus delivering them from the fearful and deathly hold of the Devil (2:14-15). Throughout Hb. 2:5ff. the author of Hebrews affirms the complete reality of Jesus' brotherhood with mankind.

In Hb. 12:2 the author again designates Jesus as ἀρχηγός. And once more the accent falls heavily upon Jesus' oneness with the community of faith. As the ἀρχηγός of faith, Jesus, like the people of faith,

experienced opposition and exposure to persecution and shame in his own earthly struggle to endure in faithfulness to God. Jesus too had shared their eschatological faith perspective, enduring present sufferings in the sure knowledge of faith that the future held a reward of joyous fulfillment. Unashamedly, the author of Hebrews presents the earthly Jesus as an active participant in the very faith struggle which characterizes human existence in this world.

Both passages in Hebrews which speak of Jesus as ἀρχηγός emphatically declare Jesus' continuity with the community of faith, a continuity established by the references to Jesus' earthly life and way.

The remaining passages in Hebrews which refer back to Jesus' earthly life all function within Hebrews' unique high priestly christology (2:17f.; 4:15; 5:7f.; 7:14; 13:12). As seen in the exegesis above, the solidarity of Jesus with mankind comes to the fore particularly at this juncture in the author of Hebrews' argument. Jesus' full participation in the human realm of existence was an absolute prerequisite to his assumption of high priestly office, as Hb. 2:17 indicates: ὥφειλεν κατὰ πάντα τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς ὁμοιωθῆναι. Further references to Jesus' experience of human weaknesses (4:15; 5:7), temptations (2:18; 4:15), obedience (4:15; 5:7-8) and suffering (2:18; 5:7-8) all serve the purpose of establishing convincingly and indisputably Jesus' ability to sympathize with men "beset by weakness," thus enabling Jesus to represent them adequately as a merciful high priest before God. Such an appeal to these aspects of Jesus' earthly life struggle provided the indispensable proof which eliminated any doubts about the legitimacy of Jesus' high priesthood.

The reference in Hb. 13:12 to Jesus' crucifixion "outside the gate" also operates within the cultic christology of Hebrews, though accentuating a different perspective. Jesus' death "outside the gate"--

in a place identified with sinner and unholiness (is there a hint here of Jesus' unity with sinful mankind?)--is set specifically in a sacrificial context. Jesus, the great high priest, is also the sacrificial victim offered for the sins of the people.

The reference in 7:14 to Jesus' descent from Judah, while not referred to as a basis for Jesus' high priesthood, functions as a necessary historical proof of the obsolescence of the OT priesthood and the inauguration of a new and vastly superior one in Jesus' high priesthood after the order of Melchizedek.

2. Focus of Faith's Confession

Yet at the same time in Hebrews' christology, reference to Jesus' earthly life and death sets him distinctly apart from mankind. It is the ἀρχηγός Jesus to whom men now look (βλέπομεν Ἰησοῦν) as the one man who has already achieved the divinely intended "glory" (2:9). We have also repeatedly noted the underlying humiliation-exaltation christology of the early Christian source operating in Hebrews. In Hb. 2 the humiliated-one, Jesus, becomes the exalted-one--an experience "not yet" (οὐπω, 2:8) fully realized by men in general. Though the ἀρχηγός title identifies Jesus as part of a community, it also set him apart from them. As ἀρχηγός Jesus first goes before them, creating a pathway to glory for them to follow. Jesus alone "tasted death for all" (ὅτι περ πάντος, 2:9). It is Jesus' unique death and suffering which has redemptive effects for men (2:14-16). The one who sanctifies is also distinct from those he sanctifies (2:11).

Similarly in Hb. 12:1-3 the author focuses his readers' eyes on Jesus the ἀρχηγός, not just as a fellow participant in the way of faith, but also as the object of their gaze of faith, he whose unique "pioneering" and "completing" of the race of faith has created a new and living

way of faith which leads to glory. This same Jesus in Hb. 12:2 now alone sits at the right hand of God.

Hebrews' high priest christology also focuses on the difference of Jesus from those he represents before God as their high priest. Though fully able to sympathize with his brothers' weaknesses, having been similarly beset with weaknesses and temptations, the high priest Jesus himself never succumbed to temptation (χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας, 4:15), remaining obedient to God's will throughout his life. Here the paradox of Jesus' relationship with men is posed most acutely. To be high priest Jesus needed to experience an authentic human life, in sympathy with their situation. Indeed, the author of Hebrews has strived to maintain the "normality" of Jesus' humanity. Nevertheless, Jesus' perfect obedience to God's will clearly distinguished him from his brothers--an obedience which established the superiority of his high priesthood and sacrifice over that of the OT cultic system, thus enabling him to help men effectively and eternally. Jesus' earthly way of life lived in obedience to God qualified him to be a truly great high priest, and as such Jesus became the sole "source of eternal salvation" (ἀίτιος σωτηρίας αἰωνίου, 5:9) for all who obey him (ὑπακούουσιν αὐτῷ, 5:9). Finally, it was the unique self-offering of Jesus alone on the cross which would cleanse the people of their sins (13:12; 2:17). Therefore, as both ἀρχηγός and ἀρχιερεὺς Jesus was clearly distinct from his fellow men.

Hebrews' use of the references to Jesus' earthly life and way of life in his christological formulations thus is characterized by this double sense. As ἀρχηγός Jesus is a member of the community of faith which he leads, in continuity with them as a fellow believer, and yet at the same time Jesus pioneers the way of faith and the way to glory as no other could, living his life and dying on their behalf (ὑπὲρ παντός,

2:9). As ἀρχιερεὺς Jesus is in complete solidarity with his human brothers, sharing fully in their human realm of existence, yet through his unique high priestly ministry and voluntary sacrifice of himself on the cross--the sacrifice of obedience, of the will (10:5-10)--Jesus also became the very means or source of his people's salvation. To both perspectives, the kind of life Jesus lived as a man was absolutely critical.

B. Duality in Paraenesis

As seen above in the exegesis, the author of Hebrews regularly turns his christological understanding of Jesus' particular earthly life and way to the service of his paraenesis. The pastoral concern to encourage, to warn and to motivate the faltering readers of Hebrews in their Christian confession dominates the author of Hebrews' mind throughout his "word of encouragement" (λόγος τῆς παρακλήσεως, 13:22).

As in his christology, there is likewise a duality in the role Jesus' earthly life plays in Hebrews' paraenesis. On one hand, Jesus' earthly life is appealed to as an example for the present church to emulate. On the other hand, Hebrews' readers are to find strength and encouragement in the fact that Jesus "in the days of his flesh" has done for them what they could never do for themselves.

1. Jesus as Exemplar (Imitatio Christi)

Once the connexion of Jesus with his brothers in their difficult situation in this present world is made, the important question becomes how Hebrews' author uses Jesus' earthly manner of life as a basis for hope and encouragement.

That Hebrews' conception of Jesus' earthly way of life provides a paradigm for his people most clearly comes to light in the author's portrayal of Jesus as ἀρχηγός.

In Hb. 12:1-3 the author stresses primarily this exemplar perspective. The author portrays Jesus at the head of the flesh and blood

community of faith witnesses (Hb. 11), belonging to a people who endured in their faith. The Jesus of Hb. 12:2f., who in his own faith struggle as a man was confronted by hostile antagonists and the harsh reality of a shameful and cruel death on a cross, determined to persevere (ὑπέμεινεν σταυρόν , 12:2) in his faith in God--allowing that grim and threatening present to be illumined with the joyful hope of the future (ἀντὶ τῆς προκειμένης αὐτῷ χαρᾶς). Here is found a perfect example for the readers of Hebrews whose present situation resembled the difficult situation faced by Jesus, and who were presently engaged in a difficult struggle to endure (τρέχουμεν δι' ὑπομονῆς) in their own faith in God. It is precisely to Jesus' ὑπομονή that Hebrews' author directs his readers' attention, for in that ὑπομονή Jesus demonstrated the kind of faith and loyalty demanded by God from his people in the present world. Like Jesus, Hebrews' readers must endure faithfully in their present troubled situation, looking similarly to a joyful future goal. To this "leader of faith" Jesus, they now are to look--and to follow.

Similarly in Hb 2:5ff. the author holds before his readers' eyes a conception of Jesus which they are to imitate. In Hb. 2:9 the author reads Ps. 8 in light of a humiliation-exaltation christology, but the οὕτω in 2:8 clearly reflects on the readers' own situation--they were not yet "crowned with glory," but involved still in this present world of humiliation ("lower than the angels"). Hb. 2:14 further implies their present anguish and fear in a life threatening situation, and the description οἱ πειραζόμενοι in 2:18 further suggests the readers' troubling current predicament in life. But Hebrews' readers again are exhorted to envision Jesus (βλέπομεν Ἰησοῦν) who for a short time was enmeshed in the same difficult human situation. Yet, after a "short time" (βραχύ τι) Jesus was in fact "crowned with glory and honour" (2:9).

And since Hb. 2:11-13 consistently points to the unity of Jesus with the community of faith, his realization of glory augurs well for his brothers' own future exaltation--after a "short time." Jesus thus stands as a reason for hope and encouragement among those "not yet" exalted, those still in the process of being brought to glory. That Jesus "suffered" along that pathway to glory (2:9; 2:10), and that that suffering was divinely endorsed, carries with it the strong implication that his brothers in this present world may similarly expect to be "led" along a pathway of suffering on their own journey to glory. There is a strong parallel in this theme with Hb. 12:1-11 where God fittingly disciplines his "sons" with hardships and suffering which when endured in faith, as Jesus did, will "later on" (ὕστερον, 12:11) in the future produce a rich reward of righteousness and peace. The "many sons" could expect to travel the same path as their "leader" and "brother" in the way of faith. They are called, like him, to endure in that faith struggle.

The exemplar perspective on Jesus' earthly life is less explicit in Hebrews' paraenesis where the christological accent falls on Jesus as the great high priest. Interestingly though, a number of the same elements of Jesus' earthly life in the sections of Hebrews which present Jesus as ἀρχιερέας emerge again in the passages which deal with Jesus as high priest. Jesus' suffering again comes to the fore (2:18; 5:8; 13:12), as does his involvement in the flesh and blood realm of human existence (4:15) and his deep anguish at the prospect of death (5:7). The accent on Jesus' obedience (4:15; 5:8; 10:1ff.) also parallels the motif of Jesus' "endurance" in his race of faith (12:1-3).

The critical passage Hb. 4:14-5:10 is set in the context of the exhortation in 4:14 to "hold fast" to their Christian confession, an exhortation which suggests their difficulty with doing precisely that.

They are now in a "time of need" (4:16), plagued by human weaknesses, temptations, anxiety about an uncertain future and suffering. Under similar strains "in the days of his flesh" Jesus submitted himself to God's will humbly (εὐλάβεια, 5:7) and obeyed God to the end (5:8). In the light of Hb. 10:1-10, the most significant perspective on Jesus' obedience was its voluntary nature. Though Jesus, like his human brothers, had the freedom to choose otherwise, he chose voluntarily to obey God in the midst of his earthly temptations, fears and sufferings--offering up the infinitely superior sacrifice of a will in submission to God's will (10:8-10). The community of the high priest Jesus is similarly called to a life of obedience (ὑπακούουσιν, 5:9), to choose and determine to "hold fast" to their own Christian confession in the midst of temptations and suffering.

Hb. 13:12 is likewise set in a strongly paraenetic context, also a context which does contain the exemplar motif. The reference to Jesus' suffering "outside the gate/camp" on Golgotha in Hb. 13:12 brings in its wake the author's exhortation to his readers to "go out" to Jesus "outside the camp" (13:13). In their own earthly lives they were to share in the same kind of rejection, suffering and reproach that Jesus himself bore on the cross.

2. Jesus' Life as the Source of Salvation

It would, however, badly misunderstand the author of Hebrews' paraenetic intentions to imagine that he sets forth the earthly Jesus simply as an example to be followed. To be sure, as we have just outlined, there is a level at which the imitatio Christi legitimately functions within Hebrews' paraenesis, yet an even stronger emphasis in Hebrews lies on that which Jesus in his earthly life has accomplished for us (ὑπὲρ παντός, 2:9) which we could never hope to duplicate.

In Hb. 2:10 and 12:2 the very term ἀρχηγός carries within itself a sense of "firstness" which defies imitation. As ἀρχηγός Jesus precedes all others on the way of faith, uniquely creating and opening up the way of faith from beginning to end (12:2). Only the ἀρχηγός Jesus' endurance of suffering and death could be reckoned for all. Indeed, only in light of Jesus' unique life and death--especially his endurance in faithfulness to God in his earthly life despite hostile opposition and ultimately crucifixion--can the church hope to endure in their present faith struggle.

But this perception of Jesus as the unique source of salvation, as the one who makes endurance in Christian faith possible, as the one to whom the church may now look for help, is far more strongly preserved in Hebrews' portrayal of Jesus as high priest. Jesus offers a high priestly service to men which they could never hope to achieve for themselves, and that high priestly ministry gains immeasurably in form and content from what the author of Hebrews knew about Jesus' earthly manner of life.

In Hb. 2:17 Jesus' genuine solidarity with his brothers in their humanness becomes the foundation of his ability to be a "merciful and faithful" high priest. But the author adds to this basic assertion of Jesus' unity with men further observations about Jesus' particular experience of life which greatly strengthen his declaration about Jesus' high priesthood. The complete oneness of Jesus with his brothers entailed Jesus' own experience of temptation and suffering (2:18), firmly substantiating Jesus' capacity as high priest to have compassion and mercy and to "help" his brothers who presently struggle with precisely such difficulties.

The exhortation to "hold firmly" on to their confession of faith

and to "draw near" to the throne of grace with "confidence," obtaining there the mercy and grace to help just when needed, stands at the head of a passage (4:14-5:10) which perhaps more than any other in Hebrews presents Jesus as completely involved in the human situation--beset with human weaknesses, assailed by temptations, fear and suffering. To be sure, part of the reason in Hebrews' christology that the readers may "hold fast," "draw near," "have confidence," and receive sympathetic "help," is Jesus' presence in the heavenly sanctuary as their interceding great high priest (4:14) and his divine certification as a high priest (5:5-6). Nevertheless, the author of Hebrews just as firmly bases his high priestly paraenesis in 4:14-5:10 upon his understanding of the kind of earthly life Jesus lived. Why may the church now draw near to the throne of grace with such "confidence?" Because, the author argues forcefully, the high priest Jesus in his earthly life so thoroughly involved himself in the human situation--as vividly illustrated in 4:15 and especially 5:7f.--that Christians could be utterly confident of a sympathetic and merciful hearing at the throne of grace. He who was himself so immersed in the human scene could certainly sympathize with the particular problems and needs of a struggling church and could provide them with appropriate and timely assistance. Such a high priest as this became for his people the very "source of eternal salvation" (5:9) upon whom they could depend.

In Hb. 13:12 the author alludes to the sanctifying significance of Jesus' suffering "outside the gate" on Golgotha's hill. The perspective here in Hebrews' unique high priest christology is that of Jesus as the victim. The profoundly significant point here is that the high priest himself is the sacrifice for the sins of the people. But the author of Hebrews identifies the essence of that sacrifice of Jesus not so much as his death in and of itself as in his voluntary yielding of

himself in submission and obedience to God's will. This is the express point of Hb. 10:1-10. There the author of Hebrews focuses carefully on the nature of the sacrifice, its special character as shown in Jesus himself. For the author of Hebrews, the giving of his life in faithful obedience to God from beginning to end was the only perfect sacrifice ever so offered to God--a sacrifice whose benefit for men the OT cultus could never match in efficacy or permanence--a "once-for-all" event. For the author of Hebrews, the heart of this interpretation is his understanding of the genuine obedience learned by the earthly Jesus within the human crucible of weakness, temptation and suffering.

V. Conclusion

Here in the Epistle to the Hebrews we have discovered a second generation Christian pastor and theologian for whom the importance of Jesus' earthly life had scarcely paled into an almost irrelevant "thatness", completely overshadowed by the church's post-easter kerygmatic understanding of Jesus as exalted Lord and Saviour. For the author of Hebrews, Jesus' particular manner of life and death in his earthly career was an indispensable and supremely relevant consideration for the faith and life of the church in its present course of discipleship. The author of Hebrews grounds his creative christology of the faithful and merciful high priest firmly in what he knows, or believes he knows, about the humanity of Jesus. The primitive Christian humiliation-exaltation christology is discernible throughout Hebrews, and for the author of Hebrews it is the particular kind of life Jesus lived as a man which provides the basis for his subsequent exaltation to the heavens as the eschatological heavenly high priest. The details of Jesus' earthly life and his personal experiences as a man throughout his life and including his passion continue to be of foundational significance

to the faith of the church, providing it with a basis for confidence and perseverance in its present struggle of faith. For the author of Hebrews , a life of faith in this present world was of the utmost importance; and the particular earthly life of Jesus, the great high priest and the leader and perfecter of faith and salvation, possessed a supreme and abiding significance.

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